

Thos. J. Luigworth

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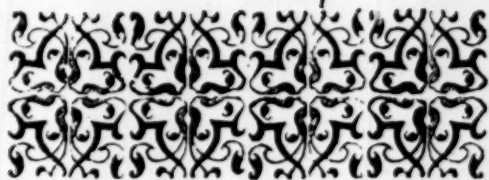
A special Trea-
tise of Gods prouidence
and of comforts against
*all kinde of crosses and ca-
lamities to be drawne
from the same.*

With an exposition of
the 107. Psalm.

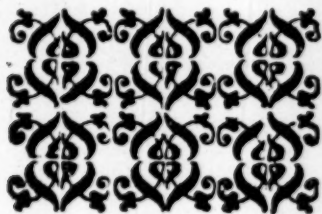
Written in Latine by
Andreas Hyperius, and
Englised by I. L. Vicar
of Werbers filde.

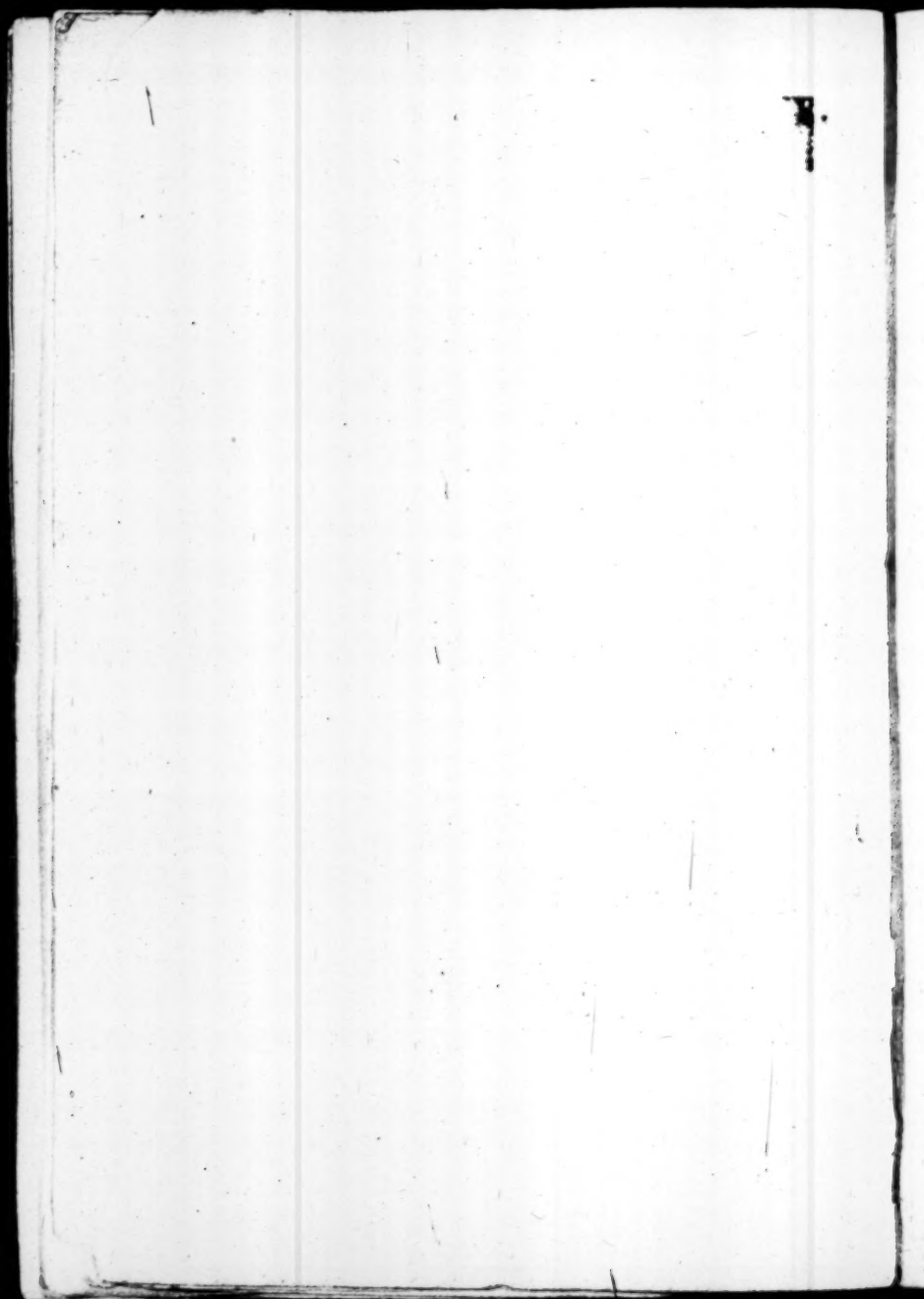
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Rnatissimo in Christo pa-
tri ac Præsuli Domino
Lanceloto Andrusio S S.
Theologiæ Doctori & pro-
fessori. nec non ecclesiæ *Westmonaste-*
riensis Decano dignissimo: *Io. Lud-*
hamus in perpetuam amoris & obser-
uantiae memoriam hanc suam qualem
cunque oppellulam ex animo dicat,
consecratque.







A Treatise
OF THE PROVI-
dence of God.

And of comfortes against all
kinde of dangers, to be fetched
from the same.

With an Exposition of the Psalmc
(after the *Hebrewes*. 107

¶ That effectuall consolations may be deriued
and drawen onely from Diuinitie, and espe-
ciallye from the knowledge of Gods Proui-
dence, *Chap. 1.*



Alorious doubtles,
and which may vehementlye
moue the mindes of all men, is
the promise and warrant of
humane Philosophie: for by it
(they say) men are perfected, and brought to
the knowledge of the soueraigne trueth: by
A it men

Of Gods

if men are taught how to frame best their
manners & conuersation: by it mens mindes
are armed against all assaultes of fortune ei-
ther subtilly fauoring or enuiously insulting:
finally, by it is shewed a way, whereby a man
may attaine vnto happy life and immortality.
But if we weigh the matter indifferently, we
shall finde that onely from our Diuinitie all
these things may exactly be perfourmed. For
why? eche one perceiuet, that naturall men,
by whom all those things are gathered toge-
ther that are set to sale vnder the name of
Philosophie, do all erre and faile in many
things: but vnto God, who hath written and
put forth deuine matters as onely best know-
en to him selfe, no such thing may possiblye be
ascribed. Whereby it commeth to passe, that in
the writings of the Philosophers, wherein
they labour to set out the trueth, a man may
finde euery where mixte opinions very absurd
and contrary one to another, wher-upon aris-
eth greater doubtfulnes then certaintie. A
witnes hereof I haue that notable Philoso-
pher M. Varro, who hath left in writing, that
as touching the endes of good and euill, there
were extant at once, two hundredth fourescore
and eight sundry sects and opinions.

But when they would frame and order a
Cittie,

Prouidence.

Little, a familie, or the manners of every pri-
 uate man, good God, what colde Iuffe, and of-
 tentimes how yll agreeing together haue they
 broached and put forth: To say nothing, that
 by some haue bene propounded such thinges
 to be brought into Common-weales (the
 Communion of Socrates and Plato amongst o-
 ther thinges is well knowne) as from the
 which all men endued with any common sence
 of nature doe worthily flie and abhorre. But
 if at any time they couet to comfort a man
 stricken with aduersitie, euen here also they
 go very confusely to worke, whilest some of
 the labour to remoue the very name of cala-
 mitie, as though it were a thing not to be ac-
 counted off, ~~but~~ some men to imagine I can-
 not tel what senselesnes, or want of grace, cleane
 contrary to manifest experience: other some a-
 gaine set before men eyes (painted in colours
 after a sorte) a certain image of sortitude, such
 as neuer was, nor neuer shalbe: and yet in the
 meane time they are neuer able to driue away
 care, feare, and the sence of sorrow and græfe
 from their mindes. Now as touching the ble-
 sed life after this painefull and troublesome
 life to be looked for, iudge ye, whether any
 thing certaine be by them brought and allead-
 ged, of whome the greatest part count those

A. 2.

things

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things for fables and trifles to be laughed at, which are brastred and set forth of men like to themselves, concerning the rewardes of good men and punishmentes of the euill, calling euen into question, whether there be any life at all remaining in the soule, or no.

But truly, Diuinitie is such a thing, as may fully satisfie the mindes (desirous of true wisdome) of all these things. This, in a few sacred bookes (for so are they called not without a cause) comprehendeth clarely and without any error, what-soeuer is necessarie to make perfit and bring the whole man to true happines. In these bookes is the knowledge of the first and soueraigne trueth (which is God him selfe, and whose only word is the trueth) so much as is expedient to be known of men in this life, plainly and substantially opened. In these the short tables of the lawes do declare and set forth all the whole rule of good living, and the same in all respectes so absolute and answerable to Gods will, that the prince of Prophets Moses most iustly glozied, that there was neuer any people or nation, that had their Common weale so wisely ordered and established (whither we consider the rites appertaining to religion, or the iudiciall forme of lawes, or the manner of contractes and bargaines,

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bargaines, and other thinges of like sort needfull and necessary for the common vse of mans life) as had the people of the Jewes, taught and instructed in all thinges by God himselfe. In these are expressed and set forth most perfitt and present remedies, which auaille not onely to the easing and helping of outward euils, but also to the pacifying and appeasing of mens consciences, which being stricken with the feare of Gods most seuerer iudgement should otherwise be diuened into desperation: of which matter Philosophie hath touched no one iot or tittle. To be short, in these onely bookes, hath God him self declared (which cannot be deceiued) what a happy and blessed life is, in what pointes it consisteth, where, when by what meanes, and to what manner of persons it belongeth. So as he that wil bestow any diligence at all in learning of these bookes, by the guiding of the holy Ghost, that man (whosoever he be) shall well perceiue and see these thinges to be true as we haue saide.

For-so-much therfore as Diuinitie sheweth her selfe a very excellent Distresse in all these thinges, and perfourmeth so much in deed as any man can possibly desire, yet in comfortes and consolations to be fitly ministred againe all griefes and calamities that can happen, she

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is beyond all measure rich and bountifull, euen the mighty Apostle Paule himselſe bearing record, who doubted not to ſay, that whatſoeuer things are written aforetime, are written for our learning, that through patience and comfort of the Scriptures we might haue hope. For ſo doth God ſeeme for this cauſe eſpecially to haue ſent into the world at ſundry times his Prophets and Apoſtles to be witneſſes of his good will toward vs, and further to haue put in writing their Sermons and doings, to the end that men of all ages might haue amongſt theſelues euerlaſting monumentes, out of which they might prouide plentifull matter of conſolation againſt all euentes and occasions, and certainly learne, that they ſhould neuer vtterly be forſaken of God. And who I pray you could either better or more effectually heale our maladies, then God him ſelf by his word: who as he is the only ſearcher of the hartes, ſo he ſone perceiueth, where our ſore græueth vs: and as by his determinate purpoſe, though vnknown vnto vs, he oftentimes ſendeth calamities for ſome ſpeciall benefite of ours ſo he onely and alone knoweth, after what ſorte and how long it is meet and conuenient for vs to be afflicted.

Wherefore, I being deſirous at this time,
wherein

Prouidence.

Wherin all thinges are full of most græuous
and rare dangers (fo; in what hystories readeſt
thou that euer at any one time there haue
beene ſuch bitter farres and diſſentions in the
cauſe of religion, ſo many monſtrous herſies,
ſo cruell perſecutions of the godly, ſuch horri-
ble warres without ceaſſing in all þe prouinces
of *Europe*, ſo many tumultes and vpproes, cap-
tiuities and exiles of moſt mighty kinges and
princes, ſuch ouerflowinges of the Seas and
waters, ſo many ſodaine and vnlooked fo; ſiers
wherof ſome is ſuppoſed to haue fallen from
heauen, other ſome to haue bzast out of the
earth: ſuch cruell hunger and ſcarcitie, ſo vni-
uerſall a plague & peſtilence, ſo many ſtrange
kindes of diſeaſes farre ſurmouning the ſkill
and cunning of þe phiſitions, as in our time and
that of late yeres to ſpeake off, we haue ſeen.
(alas poore wretches that we are) with our
eyes? I beeing deſirous (I ſay) to gather ſome
furnitures of comfort and conſolation, and
that as well fo; the behoſe of all men in gene-
rall, to whome wee are bound in the band of
Chriſtian Religion and mutuall charitie, as
alſo in eſpeciall fo; the godlyes ſake, whome
we now ſee, as gazing ſtocks and of-ſcourings
of the worlde, to be laide open to the iniuries
of all men, as by tirants to be ſpoyled of their

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goods, to be condemned most vniuersally, to wander here and there in exile and bannishment, and thereby to taste of warres, famine, pestilence, and other innumerable discommodities: Merely I supposed, that I could not more conveniently drawe them from any other place, then out of the most plentiful store-house of the holy and sacred bookes. And that for sooth not onely, because there can no kinde of danger be deuised, against which there be not extant in those bookes many remedies provided: but also for because that whatsoever thinges are brought from else where, we knowe assuredly they shall neuer obtaine so great weight and credit with the Godly, neither yet so speedily, nor effectually preuaile and goe for payement. For why? look how much diuine things excell humane, and so much also is it necessary that we preferre diuine comforts before all Philosophicall consolations.

But for as much as in the holy Scripture many thinges are sundrily euery where set forth, which may very much auaille to y comfort of afflicted mindes (for some where are found places teaching the vanitie & contempt of all earthly thinges: some where are rehearsed most large and ample promises touching the dignitie of heauenly benefites to be looked

for

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foze after this life: some where are recounted the examples of holy men, who after they had bene exercised with great and continuall conflicts of trialls & temptations, at the length were wonderfully deliuered out of all their distresses: some where is Chziste him self in the bookes of the Prophets and Apostles painted fo:th, humbled and cast down, but afterward againe lifted vp and exalted: some where are the common calamities of the Church (at all times hanging ouer it) foze-tolde and declared, and promises added as touching deliuerance neuer to be wanting: some where are sprinkled exhortations to the patient bearing of the Crosse after the example of Chziste and the holye fathers; we least we should confusedly and vno:derly heap together many matters, haue chosen one place especiall ye, which in my iudgement is notable aboue the rest, and very fitte to minister plentiful matter of all sortes of consolations, to the which also as a fountaine and wel-spring all the other places befoze specified may be referred. This same is the place Of Gods prouidence, which who-soeuer shall with some diligence peruse & consider, vnto him verilye, we suppose, nothing can be wanting, that belongeth to the matter of comfort and consolation. This place there-
foze

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foze we haue thought god fo: the cause afoze-
saide, so much as shall be conuenient fo: our
purpose, to stand vpon and handle And to the
intent we may reape the moze plentiful crop
of consolations, I suppose it will be fo: our be-
hoofe, if we vnfolde it some-what the moze at
large.

Wherein about therfoze to speake of Gods
prouidence, we deeme these principall pointes
following, as most requisite to be handled.

First, that we open and declare, what is to
be vnderstood by the name of Prouidence, ad-
ding ther-unto the testimonies of Scripture,
wherby it may appeere plainly both that there
is a Prouidence, and that also such a one, as
we haue defined it to be. Then wil we deale
against those men, that being moued with cer-
tain considerations dare be so bolde as to de-
ny it.

Secondly, wherein it differeth from Gods
predestination, foreknowledge and wisdom:
and that the Prouidence of God is not only v-
niuersall, but also particuler: dispatching some
thinges, which are wont to be alleadged to
the contrary.

Thirdly we will proue, that neither chance
no: fortune, no: destinie, no: haphazard can
rightly be maintained, where there is due
knowe

Providence.

knowledge of Gods Providence, and the same
worthily esteemed.

Fourthly, we wil briefly discusse, whether
Gods Providence imposeth necessitie vpon
things prouided, or no.

Fiftly, we will diligently declare, how out
of all those things that haue bene spoken of
Gods Providence, godlye mindes ought to
fetch matter of consolation, and so to reape
molt ample frute by the knowledge of diuine
Providence.

Sixtly to the intent we may the moze large-
ly and ordinateley teach, that against all sorts
of daungers there are certaine remedies also
appointed by Gods prouidence, we will in-
terprete and expounde the 107. Psalme. which
is altogether spent in the praising and setting
forth of Gods prouidence.

All which thinges being thus declared, we
will adde a few wordes touching the generall
commendation of the knowlegde of Gods pro-
vidence, and the right vse of Diuine consolati-
ons, and so wil we make an end of our present
discourse.

¶ What

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¶ What Prouidence is: and testimonies of Scripture, where by is prooued that it is, and likewise also the definition thereof more fully opened. Then against those that haue denyed prouidence. *Chap. 2.*



Before we determine whether there be a Prouidence of God, or no, it is requisite to knowe, what is vnderstood by þ name of Prouidence. We call Gods Prouidence, a perpetuall and vnhchangeable disposition and administration of all thinges that be.

And that Prouidence is such, and the same also most mighty, vnueriable, and continually working, it is no hard matter to declare out of the Scriptures. *Esa. 43.* I am the Lord, and beside me there is no Sauour. I haue declared, and I haue saued, & I haue caused you to heare, when there was no strange God among you: and you are my witnessses, saith the Lord, that I am God. Yea before the daye was, I am, and there is none that can deliuer out of my hand. I will doo it, & who shall let it? And euery where are places to be found, in which, what notable and wonderfull thinges soeuer are said either to haue or shall come to passe, are onely and alone

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alone attributed vnto God. There is no place almost but thou maist heare these sayings: I will be with thee, I will be thy protector and defender, I haue stricken *Pharaoh*. I haue brought you out of *Egypt*, I will wound and heale, &c. A man may finde also very often exhortations made to consider as well the great and vsuall thinges that happen, as also that succede by naturall course and order, done and procured by God him selfe. *Ioan. 5.* Chyriste saith plainly: My Father worketh euen vntil this time, and I also worke. *Ephes. 1.* By his power come all things to passe according to the purpose of his owne will.

Beholde therfore in generall God continually working, and no lesse wonderfully preserving and governing, the thinges so wonderfully by him made and created.

But now also in speciall maner, proceeding throughout the partes of the whole, it is shewed by many places of the Scripture, that God hath euen of these also a diligent care and consideration. Certes, that the perpetuall administration of heaucnlye thinges is ascribed vnto God, we see it throughout the whole Chap. 37. of *Iob*, where amongst other thinges he saith: Consider the wonderfull woorkes of God, knowest thou not how God prescribeth

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an order vnto them, and lighteneth the cloudes with his brightness?

The care in like manner that God hath in the earth and in the waters is euery where commended and set forth. *Psal. 147.* He couereth the heauen with Cloudes, and prepareth raine for the earth, and maketh the herbes to grow vpon the mountaines.

Now againe, that God careth for mens matters, *Iob* declareth at large throughout his whole Chap. 34.

Likewise the whole *Psal. 23.* The Lord feedeth me, therefore shall I want nothing. *Iere. 10.* I know O Lord, that the way of man is not in him selfe, neither is it in man to walke and direct his steppes. *Proverb. 21.* A mans goings proceede from the Lord, and how then shall he dispose his owne way? *Act. 17.* By him wee liue and moue, and haue our being. *Math. 10.* Euen the heares of your head are all numbred.

Pea and further, that God careth also for thinges farre inferiour to the state of man, it is plaine and manifest. *Psal. 145.* The eyes of all thinges looke vp and trust in thee (O Lord) and thou giuest them their meat in due season.

Thou openest thy hand and fillest euery liuing thing with thy good blessing. *Psal. 147.*

He giueth foder vnto the Cattel, and feedeth the
the

Prouidence.

the young Rauens which call vppon him.

Math. 10. Are not two Sparrowes solde for a farthing? and not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father.

All the things therfoze vniuersally that are and shall come to passe aswel in y^e heauens as in the earth, and not onely those that belong vnto man, but also the things that are farre beneath the degree of man, and are esteemed of vs to be vile and base, God as he first made & created them, so doth he still care for them, nourish and gouerne them, euery where setting forth his wisdome, goodnes and power to be sene: which Prouidence of God also toward all thinges is very notably painted forth in y^e *Psal. 104.* againe likewise *Psal. 148.* wherein all Creatures are invited and stirred vp to celebrate the prayes of **G D D.**

And out of these so many and so manifest testimonies may abundantly appeer the truth and integritie of the definition which we before alleadged. We saide that Prouidence is a certaine disposition and administration, conueting (vndoubtedly) by these two wordes to shew and declare, that euen before any things come to passe, and likewise also when they are accomplished and brought to passe, the diuine power is grauely and seriously occupied (so far forth

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forth as is becoming to his Maieſtie) about them-for we may not ſo take the matter that God doth only once determine with himſelfe, how euery thing ought to be ordered, and then afterwarde commit y busines vnto ſome other inferior causes, to proſecute the things that he beſore ordained, and to bring them to their end: but we muſt vnderſtand that he doth continually put to his hand, vntill that which is moſt wiſely ordained, be moſte mightily abſolued and thoroughly accompliſhed.

Otherwiſe Providence ſhould be no whit more excellent then bare fore-knowledge: and the tytle indeed of adminiſtration might be attributed vnto God, but the thing it ſelfe ſhould ſeeme not greatly to belong vnto him. Like as many thinges are done in the name of Kings and Princes, and are ſaid to be diſpatched by their commaundement, which notwithstanding they ſcarce know or vnderſtand, how and after what ſorte they come to paſſe becauſe they are done by other miniſters. But the caſe ſtandeth not ſo with God. He alone not only purpoſeth and ordaineth all thinges but alſo ordereth and adminiſtreth them. Neither yet ought he to be vnderſtood ſo to adminiſter thinges, as one ſordainly or at aduenture doing this or that, like as theſe men are wont to do y are diſtracted with

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with many matters & dealinges : but he with a certaine purpose and determination, and to endes lawfull and good, like vnto men wisely and long time deliberating of thinges to be done, finisheth and accomplisheth all thinges. Otherwise all thinges should be carried headlong with a certaine blinde and doubtfull motion, and Prouidence should little differ from chance and fortune: and if any thing succeeded well, or came to good passe, it might seeme to be attributed to chaunce: as it is wont to be done. Where without any deliberation before had, some Captain suddenly and at a wilde venture breaking vpon his enemies, obtayneth yet the victorie: which doubtlesse is saide to come to passe rather by haphazard then by any direction of the will or wisdom. But of God vndoubtedly, whose wisdom reacheth mightily from one end vnto an other, and disposeth all things sweetlye and comfortablye, we may not so speake. We suppose therfore that this last propertie may plainly and fitly be expressed by the word Disposition, and that other by the word Administration, and so that no small force of Gods prouidence is opened in those two wordes. We said y it is a perpetual administration, intending to signifie, that as Gods power and wisdom are neuer idle or

B1

vncoccupied,

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unoccupied, so neither that the care and government of things created, is ever at any time cast aside or remoued from him. For why: God worketh not by turnes or sittings, as one that is sometimes weary and requireth the interchangeable helpe of a deputye, vnto whom he might commit the office of sustaining and keeping all things vpight: but he worketh continually without ceasing all in all, and onely and alone bringeth all things to their appointed end. We said that it is vnchangeable, to shewe, that in all things that come to passe, yea euen in base and inferiour things, the ordinance of God is certaine and sure: in as much as it is necessary that we attribute vnto God an everlasting decre, stable purpose, and infallible wisdom, for why: God is not changed, neither doth he onely purpose and begin, but also performe and accomplish: yea and looke what he hath once decreed it shall come to passe, whatsoeuer is saide or done to the contrary. As touching the forces of mans will, whither they be able to do any thing in this behalfe, we will declare in place conuenient. Last of all we saide that it is of All things, to the end that it might appere that all things both great and small are subiect to Gods Providence. For if in case any thing could be con-
ceined

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reieued in minde, that might spring oꝛ be disposed from any other where then from the prouidence of God: we should of necessitie either imagine some other beginning equall to God him selfe, from whom that thing should come and proceed: oꝛ els at the leaste that the same thing so sprung vp of it selfe, and standing by his owne strength, had a hidden power of Diuinitie in it, and were euen a new God: which once to thinke oꝛ speake is abhominable. But this particule shalbe declared moꝛe at large, when we come to speake of particular prouidence. In the mean season where all y^e partes are in this wise moꝛe deeply weighed and examined, doubtlesse there is conceived a certain wonderfull maiestie of Gods prouidence, and mens mindes may secretly be stirred vp to worship and adoze the same. And hitherto, whither there be any Prouidence of God, and next what it is, I suppose it be sufficiently declared.

But we haue yet to deale against those men, that being prouoked with I wotte not what perswasions of mans corrupt reason, dare presume to deny prouidence. These mens reasons we will bring foꝛth, and least any mans mind should be moued by them to erre, we will cleerely confute them. Then will we

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adde other argumentes also of mans reason, which may confirme euery man in the right knowledge of Gods prouidence. These are the argumentes of the deniers of it.

1. That is onely to be attributed vnto God, which is bescoming to his Maiestie, and wherein his dignitie is extolled and not depressed or obscured. But if the care of humane things be attributed vnto god, his maiestie in this point someth not a little to be hurt, & very much to be detracted from his dignitie and worthines. For what is this els, thē to thrust God from his celestiaall glozve, and to drawe him downe into this filthy mire of worldlye thinges: Therfore it is not to be thought, that God careth for mens matters, and least of all for those that are moze vile and base thē man. Which argumēt is recozded for the most part in *Plinie*, where he speaketh in this sorte: It is a thing doubtleffe to be laughed at, to saye, that the thing which is cheefest aboue all other, careth for mens affaires. Should wee not beleue or doubt that he is defiled with so heauye and comber some a ministrye: And it flowed from out of the schole of Epicurus, which denyed not God indeed, as did Diagoras, Melius and such like: but yet notwithstanding he imagined, that if he would be happy and blessed in
deed

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deade, he must be altogether idle, and boide of all care. For so Epicurus being vanquished with the weaknes of his own braine, thought that prouidence could not be established, but with the great trouble and veration of God, as though God were after the manner of men subiect to affections, and could be grieved and oppressed with troubles.

2. If God regarded things humane, then all things should be done in due order, according as were conuenient to the iustice and goodnes of God. But we see openly and almost commonly that all things are done most confusedly and out of order, and that with euill men it goeth well, and contrariwise with good men, ill. Therfore there is no prouidence of God, and god regardeth not humane affaires. Which argument also is confirmed with a certaine similitude. Like as neither a house nor Common-weale is saide to be established in due order & discipline, if in it there be neither rewards appointed for good deeds, nor punishments for defaultes: so seemeth the worlde not to be gouerned by diuine moderation. And this argument is of most weight and hath moued very much the mindes euen of wise men, For seeing most vile and wretched persons, tyrantes, traitors and such like, to enioye good

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Successes, and to live long in happy state and condition, and contrarily all things to fall out unhappily to the good and vertuous, and oftentimes to be very despitefully handled of the wicked, and to be dispatched out of the way, at the least to come very seldom to any good point or issue: they could iudge no other, but that God in very deed was not acquainted with mens matters, and much lesse had any care of them: according as it is reported that Diogenes Cynicus was wont to say, that Harpalus (who in those daies was counted a very happy and fortunate thiefe) bare witness against the Gods, because he lived so long time in that estate and condition. Yea the Saintes and holy men haue bene moued sometimes by this consideration, to suspect, that they had utterly bene forsaken of God, and that God had no manner of care of them. As touching which thing *Psal. 72.* the godly man Dauid being afflicted and in heaviness complaineth, saying: How dooth God know it? or is there knowledge in the most highest? Lo these are the wicked, yet prosper they alwaies in the worlde, and increase in riches. Certainly I haue cleansed my hart in vaine, and washed my handes in innocencie, &c. *Psal. 74. 75.*

3. If God prouided for mens matters, it should

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Should chiefly appære by this, that he hath giuen vnto man reason, which in very deed seemeth to be as a certaine testimony of Gods diuine power and goodnes alwaies conuersant and abiding with men. But this waye it appæreth not sufficiently that man is prouided for. Therfore God passeth not for mens matters. The minor or second proposition is proued. For from the reason which God hath giuen vnto man, there arise dayly more euils & inconueniences vnto him the benefites or goodturnes. Therfore either God careth not for mens matters, or it had bene much better if man had not had reason giuen vnto him at all, then to be giuen with so great discommodities. This proufe is confirmed by a similitude: like as wine because it sildome times helpeth, but oftentimes hurteth sick folkes, is better not to be ministred vnto them at all, then to be dangerously taken: euen so reason, in as much as it seemeth to procure more hurt vnto man then good, it had bene better not to be giuen vnto him at all, then so bountifully and largely to be giuen.

These are the chiefe argumentes, being of greatest weight and moment: out of which all other, if any be alleadged, doe for the most part flowe and proceed. These then we will in
sewe

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sewe wordes dispatch.

To the firste it is answered by denying the Minor or second proposition. For why? Gods Maiestie is not here diminished, but rather becommeth more famous and notable. The more things that God doeth, the more shineth forth his power and goodnes in the. And God is no more defiled with the care of things earthly and vile, then the Sunne is defiled by shining euen vpon foule and filthy places. Neither must we imagine that God is proud, and a contemner of the things that he himselfe hath created, as though he should despise the, as vnworthy of him self: and much lesse that he seeketh his ease, as though he should at any time be wearied with labour. Wherefore it is no strange matter for God, to take vnto him selfe y care of things earthly. But if any reply and say, y euen kings regarde not allthings, specially such as are of least accompt, and therefore deem it a thing very vnnmeet, that the care of inferior matters should be attributed vnto God: doubtlesse these men are much deceived. These men wil take vpon the to iudge of diuine matters by things humane. But this similitude is of no force. For why? Kings are compelled to commit many things vnto other, because in very deed they are not able to do all things

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things of them-selues: but the case standeth not so with God. He needeth not the helpe of a substitute or deputie: he is able to bring to passe whatsoeuer he will. Neither is any thing vnworthy of God, that is turned vnto good. But whatsoeuer is don by him, is turned vnto good: if not vnto good in respect of vs, yet certes vnto good in respect of God him selfe, that is to saye, to the illustration and setting forth of his power, goodnes & wisdom which is sufficient. But of this thing more at large, when we shall entreate of particular Prouidence.

To the second it is answered by denying againe the Minor: because that in this is the iudgement of mans reason deceived, for that it cannot discern the causes, for which God ordaineth these things so to come to passe in the worlde.

First, reason cannot iudge, that all men indifferently are sinners before God, & that none can be found so holy, but that he hath deserved the wrath of God. This if reason could perceiue it might vnderstand that it is by no meanes against order or iustice, that euen good men also are afflicted in this worlde.

Secondly, reason sayleth in this poynte, in that it supposeth al these euils to be sent from
God

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God being angry, and to y destruction of men: When as notwithstanding the Scripture manifestly teacheth, that scourges are oft-times tokens of Gods good will (for whome the Lord loueth, them he chastizeth: *Heb. 12. Prover. 3.*) and likewise for the behoufe & profit of the good that are afflicted. For y godly by this meanes are exercised and growe forward in faith, they are stirred by to inuocation of God, to patience and charitie toward their neighbour, they are strengthened in hope &c. But contrariwise, benefites & happy successe do turne for the moste parte to mens destruction. For by them men are estranged from God, they conceiue boldenes and contempt against their bzetheren, yea they are blinded by little and little, vntill at length they come vtterly to confusion.

Thirde, albeit God sendeth euills and calamities vnto good men as punishing the and being angry with them, yet he doth it, whilst they liue here in this worlde, least after they be departed, they should be compelled to suffer in an other worlde. (we are chaldned of the Lord, saith the Apostle, *1. Corinth. 11.* to the intent we should not be condēned with the world) and so be subiect to euerlasting torments. But to the wicked and vngodly, he graunteth all thinges prosperous here in this life, to the end that

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that afterward they may so much the more iustly be damned, and seuerely punished. Of which thing we haue a testimony in the Euangelicall example of Lazarus and the rich man.

These causes I say, wherein both the righteousness and godnes of God doth appære, the holy Scripture propoundeth vnto vs : but reason being destitute of the word : cannot see or perceiue them. Wherefore it is manifest, in this behalfe, to wit, in that the godly are punished here, and the wicked not so, that we must not say, that therfore things are here disorderly down : when as all these things are for certain profitable causes, and vnto iust & lawfull endes directed by Gods dispensation. But as touching the fore said similitude, we answer that all things are not here alike. For why : in the Common-weale, it is a thing necessary in deed to be obserued, that to the euill punishments should be inflicted, and rewardes to the good : because that without this consideration neither could publique peace and tranquillitie stand, neither any order be kept and retayned. But in the administration of the world, albeit the godly are afflicted, and the wicked escape, yet remaine all things still in good order, and God turneth that inequalitye vnto a good end and purpose.

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To the third argument it is answered, that God indeed hath adozned man with that excellent giste of reason, wherby he might not onely surmount all other creatures, but also haue in him selfe a certaine testimonye of the diuine power alwaies present and working in him. For in this respect man is saide to be created after the likenes of God, and to beare the image of God about him. But in such wise did God giue it to the first man, that he put it in his choice and power, to vse the same freely either vnto good or euill. When therfore man turned it vnto euill, and also to his owne destruction, doubtlesse the fault was to be imputed vnto him selfe, who so shamefully abused so great a benefite. Therfore it followeth not that it had bene better not to haue bene giuen vnto man, then to be giuen with so great discommodities: for it was giuen to a good end, and he might haue vled it well if he had would: in which behalfe doubtlesse God had abundantly provided for man. But after the fall of man, albeit all men are caried more prouely vnto euill then vnto good, and that there remaineth scarce one little sparke of mans libertie, yet for all that reason abideth still not so farre forth in all respectes depauiued and peruerfed, but that it is a very euident

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dent marke of Gods image, and testifieth that God hath euen still a care of moztall men, according as we may see a number by the guiding therof to be ledde and prepared (after a sorte) vnto good. Moreouer God doth still gouerne the minde and reason, secretly stirreth them vnto vertue and goodnes, working al in in all: as touching which thing we haue often and many sentences in the Scriptures, and some we haue cited befoze. It is euident therfore, that God doth prouide for mens matters. Now without any busines may other reasons be answered that are wont to be objected, of which sorte is this: If God, say they, haue prouided for man in giuing him reason, then for those onely hath he prouided, vpon whom he hath bestowed good reason, which vndoubtedly are very fewe, and almost none at all. But it is an absurd thing to say, that God prouideth onely for some fewe, neglecting or excludng others: It followeth therfore, that no man is prouided for. We saye that God would indede prouide indifferently for all men, like as he hath indifferently giuen to all men the benefite of reason: but in that some doo vse it better then other some, it consisteth for the most parte in the men theselues. But if they yet proceeding further wil inferre,
that

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that euen God him selfe also is to be blamed, who hath giuen reason vnto these, whome he knew would vse the same pꛑuisslye and pꛑnerly: like as that Whisition is not without faulte, that granteth to his patient wme, and yet knoweth well enough that if he take it without mixture, it will soone turn to his bane and poyson. Hẽre the consequence is denied. For albeit God knewe before that man would abuse the benefite of reason, yet was it conuenient in the meane time for Gods goodnes, to decke and adorne man with most large and ample giftes, to the intent that afterward the whole blame might so much the more iustly be laide vpon him, in whose choice it was to vse the commoditie receiued either well or ill. Furthermore considering that God also foreknew, how and by what meanes to succour and prouide for man againe being fallen, and how greatly his gloꝛy, power and goodnes ought to be aduanced and set forth by his restoring againe: considering likewise that God was by no lawe bound vnto man, to keep him from falling: certes he cannot be iudged to haue don either vniwisely or vniustly, in adorning man with reason that was afterward to fall, and in suffering him to slide.

But against these arguments now propounded,

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ded, we will set other again much more strong and forceable, prouing the prouidence of God to the intent that if any be offended any way with the former, the same may haue reasons fetched euen from nature it selfe, by the which they may againe strengthen and confirm their mindes, for although the Scripture ought to be of such account w all men, that loke what the same hath once pronounced, should be receiued with all diligence: yet notwithstanding either by reason of the aduersaries, that embrace not the Scripture: or for y weakes sake, whose reason euermore still strugleth & strineth, neither willingly submitteth it self to the authority of the word: It is profitable some-times to bring forth y arguments of reason, not verily to the end that by them that which is expressed in y word of God should be confirmed, but to the intent that they should serue and waite vpon Gods word. For otherwise in every daede they are not to be receiued. Let this therfore be the first reason.

1 If there be a God, it is necessary and requisite that he be occupied, and that truly about somewhat very excellent and worthy of God. But there is nothing more excellent and more becomming vnto God, then to gouerne y world which himself hath created. Therfore y world

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is ruled by Gods prouidence.

2 If the world be not gouerned by God, the by some other thing that is endued w a greater force and wisdom, whatsoeuer a man list to imagine it to be. But there is no such thing to be found, that is either more mighty or more wise then God, for otherwise God should not be almighty and most wise. Therefore is the world gouerned by God himselfe.

3 If God in no wise gouerneth all thinges, then it is either because he knoweth not how, or because he cannot, or because he wil not. But neither of these is to be spoken of God. Wherefore God regardeth and disposeth all thinges. That he knoweth not how, how can it agree vnto him that is the soueraigne truthe, whereby he seeth and perceiueth whatsoeuer is any where to be found, & from which also al knowledge and vnderstanding floweth vnto men. That he cannot, is as false as the other, for so much as he is the highest power, whereby he accompliseth whatsoeuer hee will. And that he will not, it must of necessitie be furthest off from him, which is y^e soueraigne goodnes it self. But if he could saue any thing, and did neglect it, then doubtles he should worthily be spoyled of the title and dignitie of the soueraigne good. And this argument is very forceable, prouing
of

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of necessitie the prövidence of God.

4 We see a moste beautifull and perpetuall order of all things amongst themselves, but especially of the Sunne, the Moone, the Starrs: we see the appointed times and seasons of the yere to follow successively one after another: we see other such like things alwaies to come to passe moste decently throughout the whole world, by the which there redoundeth an incomparable comoditie and benefite to all mankinde. Therfore the worlde is governed by Gods prövidence.

5 In the Elements (as they call them) this order is obserued, that by the course and interchangeablenes of them, the nature of the world is continued: likewise in the earth and in all those things that come of the earth, as by an everlasting order and for an infinite space of tme are procreated Trees, Fruites, Vines, Beastes &c. and that truly so comely, and so profitablie are all these things disposed and set in order, that better or moze wisely they could not be. Therfore God governeth the world, yea and ruleth these inferior things by his prövidence.

6 If we looke upon things most worthy of admiration as well in the nature of celestiaall bodies, as also in terrestiaall, but chady on the
C. creatures

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creatures, amongst which there are very many brute beastes found adozned with a certain vnperceiueable force of nature secretly working in them: yet man, aswel for the excellent powers of the soule, as also for the inestimable frame and feature of the body, doth easely passe and surmount all other, and therfore is called not vnworthily, microcosmos, a little world: these things I say, if we moze nearly consider and loke into, doubtlesse our senses must either be very sencelesse and sottish, or els they will enforce vs to confesse, that with a certaine soueraign prouidence (such as cannot be perceiued but in God alone) the world with all and singular the parts therof is vncessantly gouerned and preserved.

7 The experience of great and mightie successes, especially in heroicall personages, which contrary to the hope and expectation of all men haue accomplished those things that euery man iudged to be farr aboue humane strength and abilitie, (of which sorte many things are reported of Alexander, Iulius Cæsar, and others) doth plainly proue, that there was present with them a certain diuine power, & therfore that all things among men come to passe by Gods ordinance. Which thing sameth to haue moued the Poets to attribute vnto woꝝ
thy

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thy men Gods for their parents or defenders.
8 The common consent of all men, naturally engrafted in them, wherby they are wont to aske and looke for all good things from God: further the loue and likement of rites belonging to the worship of God, semblably ingenerate in all men, doe manifestlye proue that men cannot otherwise thinke and be perswaded, but that God regardeth our affaires, heareth our requestes, sendeth bothe prosperitie & aduersitie, and to be short, hath a care of all our matters and proceedings whatsoever.

And therupon it appereth it came to passe that Plinie somewhat fondely entreating of Gods prouidence, shamefully ouershot & spake against him self: for when he had saide that it was a thing ridiculous, that the cheif and soueraigne thinge whatsoever it were should haue a care of mens matters, hee added not long after: that it was to be beleued by the vse and experience of mans lyfe, that God had a care of mens matters. Which truely are contrary one vnto an other, vnlesse we so take it, that by that cheif and souereigne thinge is vnderstanded God regarding onely thinges heauenly, as Aristotle imagined: and by the Goddes to be ment many and diuers inferior powers as substitutes, vnto whome it belongs

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eth to care for these things here belowe.

But hetherto to proue the prouidence of God, and to open what it is, I feare least it may seeme ouer much.

Wherein the Prouidence of God differeth from his foreknowledge, Predestination, and wisdom: and that Gods prouidence is not only vniuersall, but also particular. *Chap. 3.*



Nowe the matter requireth that we declare more at large what this Prouidence is, and how farre the force thereof extendeth. But before we do that, it is requisite to shewe wherein Gods prouidence differeth from the foreknowledge, Predestination and wisdom of God: least in proceeding we rashly confound the properties that belong vnto them: For why? we haue not to determine alike of these things, although in many points they may seeme to agree together.

Predestination properly is the euerlasting decree of God, wherein he hath determined wth himself, what shal becom of euery man as touching either eternall saluation or damnation, for so did God also before the foundations of the world were laid decree that among men

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Peeter should be saued, and Iudas destroyed: & so likewise of euery one, whether they were to be saued or damned according to that saying of Paule *Ephes. 1.* He hath chosen vs in him, before the foundations of the World, that wee should be holy, and vnreproueable before him through loue: who hath predestinate vs, to be adopted into children through Iesus Christe in him self, according to the good pleasure of his wil. And as touching y^e signes or marks & also effects of predestinatiō, we haue some things written *Rom. 8.* For those which he knew before, he also predestinate (or preordayned) to be made like to the Image of his sōne, that he might be the first borne among many bretherē. Moreouer whome he predestinated, them also hee called: and whome hee called, them also hee iustified; and whome he iustified, them also he glorified.

Now, foreknowledge is that, whereby all things aswel forepast, as to come are by them selues known vnto God, and that in such sort as though they were present and before his eyes. For God foreknoweth all things, not verely as foreseeing onely what shall become hereafter of this or that, as men sometime are said to foreknowe certaine things, or at the least presume as though they foreknew them:

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neither yet as one conceiuing a naked fourme
or figure onely in his mynde, like as there is
wont to wander in our imaginations, a cer-
taine shape and image of those things which
either we haue sene before, or looke to see af-
terward: but viewling and beholding al things
whether they be past or to come, as though
they were present, and that truely with sin-
gular certaintie and moste perfite knowledge.
Wherfore also it is rather called foresknow-
ledge then foresight. For why? in God there
cannot be sene or discerned any propoztion
of the time past or to come (for he surmounteth
all times, being him self set farre aboue all
measure and quantitie of time) wherfore it is
necessarie that we conclude, that all things
are knowen vnto him as though they were
present: and further that no new or strange
thing happeneth vnto him, when the things
which he foresknewe come to passe: as who
should say, he then receiued the knowledge,
of those things, of which before he had onely
the foresknowledge, according as we are wont
to say of a man: but we must auouch al and the
whole foresknowledge to be in God simply as
knowledge, like as Augustine wittily writeth
to Simplicianus Booke 2. Quest. 2. And albeit
Cicero doth deny the foresknowledge of God
in

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in his second booke of Diuination, where disputing with his brother Quintus he laboureth to take away all foresight or fore-iudgement of things to come as wel from God as from men: that maketh no great matter. He truly is contrary to him selfe, who after that he had in one place very grauely determined of prouidence, here he most childishly denieth foreknowledge, when as that without this can by no meanes be vnderstood in God. But he that coueteth to knowe more against this vanitie of Cicero, let him read Augustine de Ciuitate Dei. Lib. 5. Cap. 9. throughout which Chapter there is a very apte disputation set downe as touching this whole matter.

But Wisdome, wherby God is said oftentimes in his scriptures to haue created & to gouern all things, is taken to be a certaine power more largely stretching it self, wherby he foreknoweth, predestinateth, and prouideth or administrateth all things rightly and ordinarily to his own glory, to our profit, and the vtilitie and ornament of all things created: and is said to doe all things wisely.

And that we may contract all things into a summe, predestination is occupied chiefly about the eternall saluation and damnation of men, which is to follow after this life: prouidence

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dence is occupied in y^e administration of those things which by an everlasting and infallible succession come to passe, throughout the whole world, and through the whole life of men. Predestination tendeth directely to the last end: providence directeth the meanes that belong ther-unto. foreknowledge doth nothing els, then most advisedly consider all things that are to come, passe, and present: Finally, wisdom may be weighed as a certaine severall facultie and most largely spreading it self, vsually applyed vnto all things that God doth. Predestination cannot be without foreknowledge, but foreknowledge may well be without Predestination. Providence also is not without foreknowledge, neuertheless foreknowledge may stand againe without providence. But without wisdom, neither foreknowledge, nor predestination, nor providence, nor any thing els that God doth, can stand or consist. Therefore, that predestination, foreknowledge, and wisdom doe differ one from another, and also from providence, it is hereby plaine and euident.

Furthermore these things beeing thus declared, a waye is after a sorte opened to enquire, what maner of thing Gods providence is, what it doth: what power it is of,

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of, and how it is occupied in the administration of all thinges: But we will alledge in this behalfe the diuers opinions also of the Philosophers, to the intent it may appeere how many reason euen heer likewise in examining of prouidence hath unhappily bewrayed her blindness: then next, the iudgements of those that haue embraced our religion, and what thinges especially are to be followed.

1 Some Philosophers there be that haue thrust prouidence into too narrow a roome, allowing in dede that God looketh downe vpon all thinges from aboue, and further granting that there is an infinite power adioined, whereby many thinges doe on euery side come wonderfully to passe: but the full power and authoritie and daily administration of thinges, or to speake more grossely, the very handling and ordering of matters they haue seperated from him, appointing all these offices vnto other inferiour Gods or potestates, I know not to whome, vnto whose gouernement and direction all thinges that here are accomplished, ought to be ascribed. But this what is it els, then with Epicurus to imagine a certaine fantastickall God, vnto whome the glorious title of prouidence is giuen, but the thing it self vtterly taken away: It is indeede graunted by
this

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this meanes that there is in God knowledge or foresight, but such as in no wise intermedleth it selfe with the doing of thinges: there is graunted also vnto him power, but such as is idle, and in very deede vtterlye impotent. which thinges sith they are very farre off from God, certes against these men as those that deny principles, we haue not to dispute.

2 Other some, of whose number is Aristotle with his followers, haue somewhat more largely stretched the compasse of Gods prouidence, although enclosed yt in certaine limits, attributing (as who saith) vnto it y administration of supernall and celestially thinges, which are next to y house of God, which house all men acknowledge to be heauen: but that hee should passe any further, descending to thinges belowe, where he might peruse and set in order the earth and earthly thinges, that they suppose to be vnbesmying so great a matter. In the meane season they iudged these thinges to be gouerned of the heauen and of the starres, and also of the partes next adioyning vnto them, in which they suspected a certaine secret power and vertue to be, which they named destinie and a necessarie connerion of all causes and effects together. For they imagined, first a certaine most large and ample

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ple vertue to be conueighed from the diuine nature by one and the selfe-same simple motion into the thinges which are next vnto it, that is to saye the heauens: then from these likewise to flowe a new force and vertue vnto those thinges which immediatlye follow, and and so forth on by a long course and order euen vnto the lowest, so long and so farre forth as all thinges feele in themselves any parte of the diuine mouing. The matter may be made more clare by a similitude. If a man take and drawe the firste linke or ring of a chayne that is rolled together and laide vpon an heape, it is necessary that eue forthwith the second link also should be moued, and so forth all the rest, untill the whole chayne doe follow whither soeuer he will: so iudge they Gods prouidence to deale in the administration of thinges, firste forth in working vpon heauentye thinges next adioynning, and then in passing by many thinges set betwene, to come by little and little euen vnto the lower also. But if a man demaund of them, why God moueth not by like reason all inferiour thinges also: they answer, that it is not seemelye euen for Kinges themselves, to knowe and vnderstand all thinges: neither meete to be spoken, that God should haue the charge of such labours committed vnto

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unto him, as a vile slave or scullion in a Princes Court would scarce undertake to do. But we also say, that for him that ruleth and directeth to order all things aright, it is not only not unseemely, but also dangerous, to neglect wittingly even the least things that make to that purpose. Wherefore this reason may serve, to prove also that some things do seeme fit for Gods providence, though the judgement of diuine matters should be drawn from thinges humane, though God could not stretch forth his power further then to the next heauens, though such a knitting together of all the partes of the world could be proued: and to be short, though it could be tried that God abhorreth small and feeble thinges as one that were either proud, or pœuish.

3. From these differeth not much the opinion of others which haue likewise subiected to the providence of God all incorruptible thinges, that is to say heauenly and elementary, then also thinges corruptible, but not all after one manner, as of which they supposed onely the kindes, but not the particulars to be preserued by Gods providence. But further they made exception of man, by reason of his excellency from this common lawe of corruptible thinges, whom they affirmed to be ruled
and

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and gouerned of God by a speciall and peculiar care. In this opinion were certaine men endued with the Iewes Philosophie, especiallye Rabbi Mose, (moued as I take it) to except man by those places of Scripture, which doe most plainely testifie, that the holye Fathers were in all their woorkes, peregrinations, warres, mariages, prouision of thinges necessary, singularlye holpen of God, and adorned with happy successes.

4 Plato, as Gregory Nissene reporteth, hath otherwise yet deuided the fundions of prouidence. For first he hath sourned a certain prouidence of the high or soveraigne God, chæfely occupied in gouerning of thinges heauenly and incoꝝpozall, and further also in the vniuersall administration of the principall partes of the whole worlde, to the intent that the kindes and specialties of thinges might by an euerlasting order and succession be maintained and preserued. If Plato had stayd heer, this opinion might haue seemed tollerable, as agreeing with those that haue attributed vnto God an vniuersall prouidence. But he as one distrusting the power of God, or as though he feared that God would be angry, if in case the charge also of small and trifling thinges should be committed vnto him: framed a certaintie

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taine second prouidence, intentinely occupied
euen about all senerall and particular things;
which are ingendred throughout this whole
world. This charge and function he took to be
assigned to certaine inferio^r Gods, gouerning
especially the motions of the celestia^l bodies,
and then pouring a conuenient force into all
inferio^r things. By meanes whereof it came
to passe, that the blinde antiquitie feigned
many Gods, whom they called Tutelares, pre-
ferring Saturne to Cozne solving, Mercury to
Marchandize, some ouer the waters, other
some (to be short) ouer other things. As tou-
ching which gouernment of inferio^r and select
Gods in the worlde, thou maist finde some
things in Augustine de Ciuitate Dei. libr. 7.
chap. 2. 3. Last of all he established also a
third prouidence, occupied in ruling of men
and their actions, assigned againe vnto other
Gods, whom the Græks called Demones, and
of their office, diopous, that is to say orderers
or ouerseers and our men Angels and familiar
Spirites. Where-upon preuailed an opinion
with all men, y^e vnto euery man immediatly
after his birth is assigned of god a good Angell,
which gouerneth his actions, helpeth him with
secret suggestions of counsell and aduice, and
to conclude) directeth all things to a good end
and

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and purpose. Many thinges there are extant in the olde wꝛiters, touching the familiar spirite of Socrates & likewise of Pythagoras. But how much this doctrine of Plato strayeth from the trueth euery man though we holde our peace can iudge, if by none other matter, yet at least by inducing the pluralitie of Gods.

5 I come now to those that haue embraced our religion, whom also it is euident to haue iudged of prouidence not after one and the selfesame manner. The most of them indæde doe willingly attribute vnto God the gouernement of thinges, but if we look moze nêrly into the matter, it wil appære to be only yet confuzed & out of order. For albeit they graunt the whole woꝛlde with al and singular the partes therof to be by a generall motion stirred and gouerned of God: Yet notwithstanding they attribute vnto euery creature his peculiar strength and libertie in certaine actions, as though that euery one were not peculiarly gouerned and directed of God. They acknowledg that all creatures are moued at haphazard, and that man is caried whither soeuer he listeth after the libertie of his owne will: So othertwise then if God should haue a sufficient share giuen him, in that he formed in his creatures certaine organs oꝛ instrumentes (of
which

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which sorte in man are the minde, reason, will, and such like powers) which in deede might according to the inclination of their nature take the beginning of their moving from God: but farther Gods power might not stretch it selfe. Therefore this prouidence they called vniuersall, wherein truelye the power of God doth trimlye appere poured abroad into all creatures, but not by a continuall dispensation and administration. And they were moued thus to determine, by a desire they had of preserving the libertie of mans will so greatly praised and commiended of many: and further, because they would by this meanes auoide an inconuenience, to witte, least God should be counted the authoꝝ of sinne in men. for which causes many and the same great learned men haue vnto these thinges giuen their consent.

6 Some againe haue confessed that all the actions of men whatsoeuer are especiallye gouerned of God, but yet onely of the godly sort, and so far soorth as they labour to a good end. These, in asmuch as their purpose is holy, they say, are diligently holpen of God, so as they may accomplish that which they haue conceived in their minde, and that God turneth away whatsoeuer might be a let or hinderance vnto

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unto them. In which respect God promised in the olde testament that he would be a God especially unto some, that is to say, their gouernor, patron and defender. But this opinion seemeth to detract the praise of goodnes from God, as though he were not alike desirous of the saluation of all men, or as though he fauoured some, and enuied other some, besides it diminisheth y^e power of God, as if he were not able to induce euill men unto goodnes, or to vse them to the perfourmance of some good thing: to conclude, it seemeth to slander God with the note of iniustice, as though soz soth he dealt not vprightly, in that he leaueth sometimes the wicked to their owne peruerse will, and withdroweth his helping hand from them.

7 Wherefore now we will reckon vp the last opinion, which we our selues also imbrace, and desire to be receiued of all men. That is this, that Gods prouidence gouerneth the worlde and all the things therein conteyned, and that truely in such sort, as by an appointed order he administreth euery thing, yea euen those that are esteemed least, and also directeth the actions of euery thing to their appointed end. Whereupon we name it the speciall or peculiar prouidence of God, and we

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auouch it so much the more diligently, by how much it is more clærey inculked in euery leafe of the holy Scripture: by how much also it is more applied to illustrate and set forth the power, goodnes, and righteousness of God: and to be shor't by how much it bringeth more weight and importance to the comforting and confirming of our mindes in all doubt'es, streight'es and dangers. For why? I suppose no man can in such sort be afflicted with troubles, but that he may by this knowledge of the particular prouidence of God, abundantly reape and receiue, wherewith to satisfie his wayward and vnquiet conscience, and wherewith to repress'e all the assaults and occasions of impacience.

And albeit we haue before, where we defined prouidence, shew'd it after a sort to be such, yet sameth it god still to confirme the same with many & more euident arguments. And first forth the waightiest testimonies were to be dralwen out of the Scriptures: but because we haue before set downe not a few, wherby we haue proued and made plain, that God hath a speciall care of all mens matters and actions belonging as wel to the minde as body, so farre forth that he guideth, moueth and aduanceth, the iudgementes, willes, enterprises

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terpizes, and endeouours of men. whither they be good or euill, vnto what parte or purpose soeuer it pleaseth him: wherby mozeouer we haue declared, that euen those thinges that are farre beneath the state and condition of men, as most vile and abiect creatures. are gouerned by Gods dispensation and ordinarie assignement, not only in generall, but also in particular: it is not needfull we should spend the time either in repeating of them, or in searching out of new. Onely this I will say, that it is meruailous, how in so great light of the Scripture some should be so blinde, as not to see Gods peculiar prouidence, or being seene not to acknowledge it. Doubtlesse the fathers haue not slenderly auouched it: of whome we will allcadge some certaine sentences, to the intent wee maye by some meanes satisfie froward iustices, which carpe and condemne euery thing, that they heare pronounced by men of their owne age.

Origen writing against *Celsus* booke 4. saith: As the husbandman according to the diuersitie of the times of the yeere doth sundry works of husbandry, and is occupied either in tilling the earth, or in purging the weedes that growe vp in it: so likewise dooth God dispose and moderate all times as it were certaine yeeres (that I

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may so speake) heerby executing euery thing in speciall, that the regarde of the whole requir-eth in generall, so as these things beeing by themselues onely (as it is in trueth) most apparantly and effsones comprehended, he directeth to their end. Semblablye in his **Commentaries vpon the Epistle to the *Romans*. on these wordes Chap. 1.** I haue oftentimes purposed to come vnto you but haue beene letted hether-to: he sheweth that God gouerneth by his prouidence all the actions and enterprises of men. Againe in his **1. Book of Commentaries vpon *Iob*.** he enterpreteth those vsuall phrased of Scripture which sound, that God speaketh to the deuill, to the firmament, to the gourd, to the moorning worme, to the fiery or burning breath: so signifie nothing els, then that all these things are by the secret potwer and prouidence of the creatoꝝ turned and moued hither and thither according to his will and pleasure, and doe at all times the commaundementes of God.

Gregory Nazanzen in his *Apologetico*, According, saith he, as in mans body some members there be that rule the body, and gouerne all the motions therof, other some that are ruled & yeeld obedience to the gouerners: so likewise in the church hath God established such a lawe of equitie

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equitie, as thereby through his deuine prouidence he disposeth & ordereth all things, yea & moderateth matters in such sort, that he hath ordeyined some to be ruled and gouerned, other some he hath giuen to be pastors and teachers. But the saide *Gregory* doth intreate yet moze clērely of the same matter in that most learned *Oration* of his, which he made touching the care of the poore, and enuatieth very grauely against those that would not allowe prouidence to stretch vnto vs and to these inferiour thinges: and teacheth in many wordes, that what thinges soeuer doe happen vnto vs in this life, whither they be prosperitie or aduersitie, riches or pouertie, sickness or health, are sent by the determinate purpose of Gods prouidence, howsoever it be vnknowne vnto vs.

Chrysostome a very graue and holy author, as well in other places as also especiallye in that booke which he entituled of Gods prouidence to *Stargirius* the Monke, saith plainely in this wise: That God hath a care not onely generally of all thinges, but also speciallye of euery one, thou maist heare him saying: It is not the will of my heavenly Father, that one of these little ones should perrish: speaking of them that beleue in him. He is indeed desirous that those also which beleue not, should be saued

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ued,& be changed into a better state,& beleue as *Paule* saith: who would haue all men to be saued,and come to the knowledge of the truth, And he him selfe saith to the *Iewes*: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. and I wil haue mercy, and not sacrifice. But now if after the fruition of so great care and prouidence they wil not become better, nor acknowledge the trueth, yet he leaueth them not so for all that: but for as much as they haue willingly depriued themselues of the participation of eternall life, he yet at the least giueth vnto them all the benefites of this life, making his Sunne to shine vpon the good and vpon the euill, and rayning vpon the iust and vniust, yea and ministering other thinges that belong to the course of this present life. But if he prouideth for his enemies also with so great care and prouidence, how shall he neglect his faithfull ones, & those that serue him with their whole hart? No, no, he will not doo it, but he cheefely fauoureth and embraceth these in all thinges. For euen the heares of your head (saith he) are all numbred. Noe he manifestly affirmeth and proueth that God careth as well for the wicked as for the good, & that euery one do receiue dayly large benefites from the prouidence of God.

Now *Augustine* in very many places commendeth

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mendeth and setteth forth in like maner the largenes of Gods prouidence. In his first booke of Order, he hath a number of thinges agreeable to this present purpose, whē as throughout that whole woꝝk he labourēth chafely to this end, to teache that all thinges are administered most dylge and orderlye by the prouidence of God in this woꝝld, albeit many thinges appere to be disorderlye down in mens matters. Again wyting vpon *Genesis ad litteram*. Booke 5. Chap. 20. 21. he commendeth Gods prouidence soꝝ that the father, as chꝛist saith *Iohn 5.* worketh vntill thistime, and as it is *1. Corinth. 15*, vnto euery seede he giueth a body at his pleasure, to euery seede his own body, soꝝ that also he moueth euery cature continually by his secret powꝛ: and because according to the *Psal. 140.* the fire, haile, snowe, yce, stormy winde and tempestes, doe the will of God: to be shꝛt soꝝ that he clotheth the Lillies and grasse of the fēlde, and gouerneth not only this vniuersall part of the woꝝld, deputed to thinges moꝝtall and corruptible, but also the most vile & abiect parcels of the same corruptible thinges. The saide father expounding *Psal. 103.* where it is saide. That God bringeth forth fodder for the cattell, & hearbs for the vse of men, taketh occasion to com-

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mend Gods prouidence, and amongst other arguments propoundeth also that most graue and weighty one, which Chyrist *Math. 10.* vseth where he saith, that the Father hath respect to a cup of colde water giuen to one of the least (of his Disciples) and not only hath respect, but also bountifullie rewardeth it. But vpon those wordes also of the *Psal. 148.* Fire and haile, snow and vapours, and stormy windes that fulfill his woord, he proueth at large, that euen the least and vilest thinges that be, as y members of a flea or Gnatte, are not onely firste formed of God, but also fashioned without ceassing, and stirred with a conuenient motion. Further in his booke 12. Chap. 4. de ciuitate Dei. he willeth vs to consider with great aduilement, euen those thinges that we iudge to be blamed as faultie & hurtfull in creatures corruptible and void of all sence, and to looke narrowly vpon the secret power of Gods prouidence in them. And in the 10. booke & 14. chap. of the same work, he hath these wordes. All thinges that either Angels or men can perform vnto men, are only and altogether in the power of the Almighty: whosoever beleueth not this, is madde. Certainly *Plotinus* the *Platonist* disputing of prouidence saith, that it reacheth from the highest God, whose beauty is vnspicable

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kable and past all vnderstanding, euen vnto these earthlye thinges here belowe, and he proueth it by a similitude taken of the beauty of leaues and flowers: all which thinges, as vile and most quickly perrishing, cannot (saith he) retaine the most comely features of their formes and fashions, vnlesse they were there formed and made, where that incomprehensible and vchangeable beautye hauing all thinges abideth and continueth. This the Lord Iesus sheweth there, where he saith: Consider the lillies of the feeld, how they grow they labour not neither doo they spinne, and yet I say vnto you, that euen *Salomon* in all his royaltie was not clothed, like one of these. Wherefore if god so clothe the grasse of the feeld which though it stand to day, is to morrow cast into the furnasse, shall he not doo much more vnto you, O yee of little faith? which woordes of *Augustins* we thought good euen for this cause to note, that also by the testimonie of *Plotinus* the *Platonickall* philosopher they might be conuincied, whosoever they be that do hardyly admitte particular prouidence. That therefore which this *Gentile* could finde the meanes to drawe not only out of the puddels of his maister *Plato*, in which the sellesame confession touching particular prouidence is found
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very clérely expressed, and chéevely in his booke of Lawes the 10. againe in his Epinonio, that is to say an appendix of lawes, (whence undoubtedly euen Proclus also drew his opinion in all respectes like and semblable in the booke which he wrote of prouidence) but also out of the fountaines of holye Scripture, as of whome the same goeth (by the report of Theodoretus) that he was sometime an hearer of our olde father Origen in the schoule of Alexandria, and tasted the secret misteries of our learning: that I say which this Gentile hath put in writing as touching Gods prouidence, let vs not be ashamed to imbrace: but rather let vs be ashamed on the other side, if we be slack to follow and endeuer to that knowledg vnto which he easily mounted and ascended.

It would be conueniēt by examples drawn out of the booke of holy Scripture to haue this thing confirmed moze at large, to witte, that the Lord worketh vpon men and vpon all thinges created by his determinate counsell & present administration: but these things for this time I suppose to be sufficient.

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The obiections against particular prouidence
confuted, where also is entreated of fortune
fate, destinie, end or haphazard. *Chap. 4.*

But now let vs see what it is that stayeth
some men or what they are able at length
to pretend, wherby they should not with vs
graunt this particular prouidence, where
through as well all the counsailes, studies,
enterpises, and actions of men are ruled and
gouerned, as also the powers, and operations
of inferiour creatures ordered and directed.

And it is to be thought, they are moued
most chesely with these reasons. First, that
sameth by this assertion of particular proui-
dence, that the freedom of mans wil is utter-
ly subuerted, and man made like vnto a sence-
lesse block, that cannot doe any thing of him
selfe, no not so much as moue, but whither
the Lord driueth him.

² Where if so great weaknes and imbeci-
litie of man be graunted, and on the other side
so great power and authoritie of prouidence
as to worke and doe all thinges, it appereth
now that sinne also, if any be committed
by man, must be imputed to God him selfe:
which truly once to conceiue in the minde,
were a hainous offence.

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3 By this meanes are excluded vniuersally all second causes: wherof notwithstanding that some regard is to be had, there is no man but willingly graunteth.

Moreover there arise also other waightye questions, and very troublesome doubts. For by establishing of this particular prouidence, there seemeth againe to be induced and established the *Stoikes* fate or destiny: further that all casuall thinges are ouerthrowne, and such as by an vsuall custome, are saide to happen by chaunce: againe that *contingens* or hapazard is taken away, in defence notwithstanding wherof there be excellent diuines that do yet at this day labour with great consent.

For these causes I suppose, and the same doubtlesse not slender but meruailloys perplexed, it appereth that a number are moued to yeld vnto those that allowe only vniuersall prouidence, which it seemeth expedient to defend, least they should be inforced to graunt so many inconueniences & absurdities, as we haue now rehearsed.

It shall therfore be our part and duety, if at least we couet to haue speciall or particular prouidence remaine safe and inuiolate, to entreat of al these thinges, and so farre forth as we may and necessitie shall require, declare that

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that those things hurt either not at all, or els not so much, as some doe suppose.

Wherefore as touching that first reason concerning the libertie of our will, we will conclude the matter in a short summe. As oft as there is any question made of the power of our will, they are wont so to distinguish mens actions, that some are said to be of things spirituall and internall, which namely belong to God and his Kingdome, and to the saluation of soules: and some of things earthly or externall, which doe appertaine to the common course of this life, and without the which the same can by no means be passed ouer.

To be short, some haue appointed means or middle actions. In euery of these what man is able to doe, we will briefly consider.

Wherefore in spirituall or internall actions, which are occupied about the knowledge of God and of his will towarde vs, also about the ordering of our life answerable to such knowledge, there is no man but confesseth that man is able to doe nothing by his owne naturall strength: but if so be he doe any thing in this behalfe, that it ought to be ascribed to the holy Ghoste, who in the regenerate woorketh effectually, by enclining, gouerning and directing their mindes and willes vnto those things,

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things, that may be pleasing and acceptable vnto God. This doctrine is thoroughly and euery where approued in the holy Scriptures.

Hiere. 21. I know Lord, that it is not in man to guide his owne way, nor in the sonne of man to direct his steppes. *Hiere, 30.* I will dispose him, and he shall come vnto me : for who is he that hath made his harte so willinge, that he can come vnto me ? saith the Lord. *Psal. 36.* It is the Lord that must direct the steppes of man.

Psal. 119. Incline my hart vnto thy testimonies, and not vnto couetousnes. Turne away mine eyes, least they beholde vanitie. &c.

Many things to the same effecte are further noted in the said Psalm. *Iohn. 3.* A man can receiue nothing except it be giuen him from Heauen. *Iohn 6.* No man commeth to me, except my Father drawe him. *Iohn. 15.* without me ye can doo nothing. *1. Corinth. 2.* The naturall man perceiueth not the thinges that belong to the spirit of God. *2. Corinth. 3.* We are not able of our selues to thinke any thing as of our selues : but if we be able to doo anything, it commeth of God, who hath made vs able ministers of the newe Testament. To be short innumerable are the places that confirme this doctrine, and none of those whome the Church acknowledgeth for diuines, haue euery at any time

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time taught other wise, except peraduenture that the *Pelagians* or their followers haue attempted something differing from it.

Now in earthlye or externall actions, of which sorte are the exercises of politique and houlholde affaires, of the liberall artes likewise and handycrafts, howsoever a man may seeme to be able of himselfe to doe any thinge, and after his owne fancy & likement to bring it to passe, yet notwithstanding, all men doe graunt this againe, that he is ofte times letted and hindzed in this behalfe, whether it be of God, or of the deuill (whome God bleseth euer and anon as his minister and instrument) or of his owne reason and iudgement, which is very much blinded, and causeth him oft times to stumble, so as he preferreth euill thinges before the good. Hence it commeth to passe by Gods disposition, that some magistrate dooth one while gouerne the Commonweale as becommeth him, and an other while the same chaungeth his purpose, or els peraduenture, some wicked and vngodly Tirant succedeth him in his place. According to that of the *Pre-verb. 21.* As the riuers of waters, so is the Kings harte directed by the hand of the Lord, and he enclyneth it whether soeuer he will.

Iob. 34. The Lord setteth vp the hypocrite to reigne,

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Iob. 34. The Lord setteth vp the hypocrite to reigne,

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reigne, because of the snares of the people.

Proverb. 16. A diuine sentence is in the lips of the King, therefore his mouth shall not transgresse in iudgement. A true weight and balance are the iudgement of the Lord, and all the weightes of the bagge are his woork. In the same Chapter: The Lord hath made all thinges for his owne sake, yea euen the wicked for the day of euill. **Now,** that the Maiestrate dealeth wickedly, that the Subiects deale vngodly, it commeth so to passe by the Lordes ordinance.

That riches, wife, childrē, contractes or bargaines, knowledge of artes and sciences, the vse or abuse of y same, that al these things (I say) doe succed or not succed after the only will and pleasure of God, it is moze manifest then that it needeth by heaping vp of witnesses to be proued.

Finally if we loke into meane or middle actions, such namelye as tende both to a good and euill end, and are don of all indifferently as well good as bad: euen here also nothinge cometh to passe, be it right or wrong, but so farre forth as it seemeth good vnto the Lord to dispose it. The minde, body, members and whatsoeuer els is necessary to the doing or accomplishing of any thing, is especially moued by the Lord him selfe. It seemeth a matter of
no

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no great waight, to speak, to lift vp the hand, to holde vp the foot, to eate, to drinck, to stand, to sitte, to goe any whither or not to goe: and yet euen these things the Lord disposeth in all men, neither can we doo any one of them, but by his inclination and direction. *Pro. 16.* It is in man to prepare the hart, but the answere of the tung commeth of the Lord. *Act. 17.* By him we liue, moue, and haue our being. Wherefore euen in these actions also the attempts and enterprises of men are seen oftentimes to be letted and hindered, and that by God him selfe. What seemeth to be of little account, the in ciuill matters to ioyne thy self in company with this man or with that: And yet *1. Sam. 10.* They only foillow Saule, whose hartes the Lord had touched, as for the wicked men they could not foillow him. Euery man thinketh it an easie matter either to sit still, or to rise vp: but *Hely* could not sit so still, but y he fell out of his seate, brake his neck and died, because the Lord had so ordained it to come to passe before. *1. Samu. 4.* To stretch out or pluck in the arme, to speake wordes likewise & preach vnto any, no man would iudge but that it were very free and left to euery mans choice: and yet for all that was *Ieroboams* letted that he could not pull back his arme: *1. King. 13.*

C.

Herode

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Herode was forbidden to hold the people any longer with talks. *Act. 12.* Whilste he was so dainly stricken by the Angel. Neither is there cause why any man should alleadg, that these thinges ought to be considered as miraculous and moze then ordinarie, when as all these thinges do teach and enstruct vs also abundantly touching the ordinarie dispensation of God, and further do most grauely admonishe vs, that in all our actions which we take in hand, we should alwaies haue the Maiestie and power of Gods prouidence befoze our eyes. What shall we say to this that we read euen the elect also to haue bene stayed from their godly purpose, and that by the Lord himselfe? Paule had oftentimes purposed to visite the *Romanes.* and was letted. *Rom. 1.* The same. *Act. 16.* prepared with his companions to goe into *Bithynia,* but he was not suffered by the spirite. And for the same cause Iames in the 4. Chap. of his Epistle doth wisely teach vs in all our attemptes and purposes, to say, If the Lord will. To conclude, neither in spiritual or internall actions, neither in corporall or external, neither in mean or middle can we do any thing at all, but so farre forth as the Lord by his prouidence doth gouerne and direct vs.

What

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What then: are we able to doe nothing by our owne will: nothing by our owne choyce? Yes, I graunt. Man hath his choice, in man there is a will, as in him also there is reason and iudgement. For who would goe about to take these thinges from him, when as the Scriptures also doe propound many thinges touching the will of man, wherby he turneth him selfe one while this way, another while that way: But the matter commeth to this point, that choyce and will of his is very sore wounded, weake and feeble, so as it scarce deserueth so much as the bare name, neither can it proceed further in doing of any thing, then the Lorde prescribeth. Thus then worketh Gods prouidence, and withall worketh mans will. If the prouidence of God hath determined any thing to be don by man, the is mans will also caried to the selfesame thing, applying it self wholly vnto it, and waighting vpon it, no otherwise then the horse, who as the rider turneth the bridle, so doth he turne him selfe into this or that way. Which similitude *Augustine* also vsed, and in my iudgement very aptly. For like as the Rider in very deepe ruleth the horse, and neuerthelesse the horse is he that goeth forward by his own motion: euen so God directeth man also, and yet ne-

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tier the later man doth of his owne will, that which he doth. For why it followeth not, that because the Lord ruleth and moderateth the actions, therfore man worketh not of his owne will: for indeed the very will worketh together with Gods prouidence, yea and such a will is brought forth, as the Lord ordaineth before should be. Howbeit in the meane time the will of choice doth not euery where and after the same maner confirm it self to Gods prouidence. For although it be true, that the will by a certaine necessitie doth serue the diuine prouidence, yet doth it not serue it by compulsion: which if we would wisely distinguish from necessitie, many offences and controuersies might easily be taken away: concerning which thing *Augustine* hath said some what in his 3. book and 4. Chap. of Free-will. When therfore Gods prouidence ordaineth good to be done by vs, then hath the wil it selfe also respect vnto good, and is after a sorte inclined therunto, so long as by the stirring of the holy Ghost (of whome also it is secretly certified, of the diuine ordinance) it receiueth strength, and proceedeth to the work, and accomplisheth it: albeit at the first the will doth hardly agree, and for a time deuileth waies, how it may kick against it. But where the
Lord

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Lord ordaineth not good to be don, there the
 will likewise is estranged from good, and (as
 it is alwaies prone vnto euill: *Gene. 8.*) so it
 runneth freely to that which is naught, yea
 and feeling (as it were) the bydle somewhat
 lose, it enterpriseth something which it suppo-
 seth to be in it owne power, and so obeying
 corrupt affections by little and litle executeth
 euill according to it owne desire. Hitherto be-
 long all the places, wherby it is signified, that
 the Lord him selfe dooth harden, *Exod. 4. 7. 10.*
11. 14. Rom. 9. Dent. 2. Esa. 63. Iohn. 12. out of
Esay. 6. maketh blind, giueth or taketh away
 the hart, giueth the spirite of slumber, *Rom. 11*
out of Esay. 6. delinereth into a reprobate
 sence, *Rom. 1.* leadeth into temptation: againe
 the places wherin is declared, that men also
 do aggrauate and harden their owne hartes,
 that they will not see, that they will not vn-
 derstand. As in *Exodus* it is often repeated,
 that the Lord hardened *Pharaos* hart, and by
 and by also is added the like thing of *Pharao*
 him selfe. *Pharao* returned (saith he) and went
 againe into his house, neither did he set his hart
 at all vnto this thing. *Exod. 7.* But more clær-
 ly in the 8. of *Exod.* *Pharao* seeing that he had
 respit giuen him, hardened his hart and would
 not heare them. Which wordes being there

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and in the 9. Chap. repeated, are very worthy to be obserued.

So also *Esa. 50.* The Lord God opened mine eare, and I was not rebellious, neither turned I back. *Iohn. 1.* As many as receiued him, to them he gaue power to be the sonnes of God, euen to them that beleue in his name. *Iohn. 7* If a man wil obey his wil, that man shall know of his doctrine. *Math. 23.* Hierusalem, Hierusalem, how often would I haue gathered thy children together, euen as the Henne gathereth her Chickens vnder her winges, and thou wouldst not? *Act. 13.* So many beleued as were ordeined to eternall life, &c.

Therefore not to tarry vpon many places, we are by Gods pzouidence lead oꝛ drawen to all kinde of actions whatsoeuer, and yet nevertheless there remaineth a certaine choise oꝛ will in vs, wh^{ch} consoꝛmeth it selfe to the diuine pzouidence, and is obedient euen of necessitie (to wit because it is necessarie that that should be perfourmed which god hath decreed) and yet not by compulsion: so as namely, if it be holpen by the holy ghosste, it inclineth vnto good: but if it be not holpen, it falleth vnto euill. wherunto it is of it self prone and ready. And so standeth fast (after y^e minde of the scripture) Gods particular pzouidence, busily

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busily occupied in and about all and singular the actions of men: so also standeth fast mans choice or will, is not in all respectes bond, so not in all respectes sound or free. To this effect hath *Augustine* some thinges in his 2. booke and 2.3.4. Chap. of Free-will.

Now this doctrine is profitable, not onely to put vs in minde, that so ofte as we take in hand to do any thing, we should looke for all power and successe of our doing from y^e Lord: but also that we should enter into a more diligent account, to conforme our will to Gods will, and alwaies to be carefull, to embrace that which is good and acceptable vnto God. And this that it may y^e better come to passe, we must pray continually vnto the Lord with the Prophet, saying: Incline my hart, o Lord, vnto thy testimonies, &c.

Where in the second place it was objected against particular prouidence, that namely it should seeme thereby to follow, that God is the autho^r of sinne, and that the euill which is committed by man, is to be imputed vnto God, that matter now we haue to consider off.

It cannot be denied, but that this one reason hath great force in it to y^e abandoning of particular prouidence. And who is he that would not tremble and quake to allow of any
C.iiij. thing

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thing (though but in outward shewe) where by it might appeere that the diuine goodnes should be diminished, and the glozve of God neuer so little defaced? But defaced it must needes be, if we say that he which is the soueraigne god, and that neither will nor can doo any thing but god, doth now degenerate from goodnes, & becommeth y^e autho^r of sunne. And surely by y^e assertion of particuler p^rouidence, and by those places which we lastlye touched to th^e establisshing of it, exp^ressly declaring that God hardeneth, blindeth, giueth the spirite of slumber, deliuereth into a reprobate sence, lea^deth into temptation, &c. It seemeth most closely that so much is graunted, and mans reason doth effesones herupon, catch matter of cauilling. If it be God, saith it, that hardeneth and maketh blinde, what man is he that can resist Gods will? how may he withd^rawe him selfe from that, vnto the which the Lord by his o^rdinance dooth (as ye would say) thrust him forward? But if in case a man cannot chuse but doo that which the Lord hath p^ro^rdained to be done by him, it must needes follow that he sinneth by the wil of God, which if it be graunted, then cannot he be called to accompte, or pleaded guiltie, and much lesse be subiect to any paines or punishments for the
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the doing of it. For to lay punishment vpon such a one, is euē as much an effect as to draw the innocent into danger. to rage against the guiltlesse, yea and to oppose him selfe against the ordinance and will of God. These thinges therfore least to the great and intolerable offence of many they should be vttered and minister occasion to the wicked to take carnall libertie, and to excuse their owne perversenes in the sinnes which they dayly committe, it is very requisite to proue, that God is by no meanes the author or cause of sinne.

But how and after what sorte this may be done, it is not so easie a matter to discusse. and especiall ye because the places of Scripture before rehearsed doe put vs to some busines. As coueting therfore to auide so many inconueniences as doe seeme heruppon to followe, first some haue presumed to diminish Gods prouidence, in saying that God doth by no meanes regarde these inferiour thinges: for it were a very vnseemely thing, that so great a Maiesty should be entangled with our sinnes and uncleannes. For which cause also they haue deuized Chaunce-medley or haphazard. wherof we will speake also in fitte place. Other some haue thought this course to be best, namely, to extol mans will and to make the same most franke

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franke and frée, doing and performing with full power and authority, not only euill things but also good, so as it may deserue euen eternall life by it owne proper force and strength.

And therfore that the causes of all actions ought vnto this most franke and frée will to be ascribed. But with these men we think it not good to dispute any further, seeing we haue sufficiently declared, both that all these thinges here belowe are cared for of God, and also how farre forth our will is able to worke or do any thing whatsoever. Now other some more religious then the former haue sought out other helpes, and some of them haue referred all those places, (wherby it seemeth to be met that God doth worke together vnto sinne) vnto foreknowledge, saying, that God indeed foresaw and foreknew that men would sinne, but provided not, that is to saye, disposed by his incomprehensible counsell, that such actions should be done by men. And so seeing foreknowledge alone doth worke nothing at all to the committing of sinne, neither by any meanes enforce it, they thinke that God is abundantly excused, and farre from being the cause of any sinne. Some liked better to vse a distinction, whereby they determine some thinges to be done simply by the absolute

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lute will of God, and some thinges onely by his permission, and wincking at them (if it be lawfull so to speake.) After the opinion of these men, when it is saide that God hardened *Pharaos* hart, the *Hebrue* phrase is so to be expounded, as that the sence should be, that *Pharao* was in deed hardened not by the effectuall will of God, but only by his permission and sufferance. And as permission hath no blame in it selfe, especiall ye where it is not bound of duety to let euill, so that the cause of sinne can by no meanes be laid vpon God. And this reason hath preuailed with a great number. But if in case we consider well of the matter, we shall perceine that these interpretations as they be farre fetcht, so are they neither necessary, neither can they very well hang together for as touching foreknowledge first by this reason the force of prouidence is excluded from many thinges, and is pent vp in too narrowe a roome. Secondlye there remaineth yet something, for which God may by wicked reason be accused and found fault with. For if God hath foresene euill, and not lettred it (sith it was in his power to doe it) the hath he not done wel, insomuch as he preuented not that in time, which he foresaw should come to passe. And so is God againe made the authoꝝ

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author of sinne. For permission dooth attribut
such an idleness in a maner vnto God, as *Epi-
chyrus* dreamed off. Certes it would be a thing
not very seemelye or commendable in God,
when a man attempteth to doo any thing by
his own naturall inclination, to dissemble the
matter in such sorte, as to suffer him to runne
headlong into perdition and destruction. For
what father could abide to see his little childe
neere vnto some certaine danger, and would
not by and by helpe him and pluck him from
it: further it is an absurd thing, that God
should permit any thing which he would not
haue to be doon, as who should say, that any
thing could come to passe without his know-
ledge or against his will. And how shall we
knowe y God permitteth a thing, but because
he willeth it: How much moze truely the may
we say, that God dooth simplye will a thing,
the permit or suffer it: I know there be some
that defend this interpretation of permission
by byinging forth certain places of Scripture,
as nainely these. *Act. 14.* God in times past suf-
fred al the Gentils to walk in their own waies.
Againe *Psal. 81.* My people would not hear
my voyce, and *Israell* would none of me. Ther-
fore I gaue them vp into the hardnes of their
hart, that they might walke in their own coun-
sels.

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cel. 1. *Corinth. 10.* God is faithfull, which will not suffer you to be tēpted aboue your strength But hèreby it is not meant, that God dooth generally giue ouer vnto themselves, all that are about to fall into sinne, but rather that he dooth then in dēde sometimes forsake the wicked and suffer them to perrish with their owne deuises, when after sundry and often admonitions they will not be brought to repent: or that he doth now & then leaue euen the goodly also to the deuill for a time to be tryed with diuers troubles and temptations. Which thing that it commeth to passe by the singular prouidence of God, and by his iust iudgement, it is in it selfe clære and manifest. And these thinges are so farre off from being done without the determination of Gods wisdom, that euen the singular prouidence of God doth shine & shew forth it self in them. Moreouer, sith these places are very fewe in comparison which same to allowe permission, it were a very vnmete thing, to wright innumerable other places (wherin is clærelye and without ambiguitie ascribed vnto God his woork in the hartes and willes of men) and (in stead of discovering the natieue sence and meaning) to drawe them with violence into the compasse of those places,

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Wherefore we must stick fast to y^e plaine and simple meaninge of the holy Scriptures, and holde fast the true and naturall signification of the wordes, auouching for a certaintie that God doth all in all, not by permission or sufferance, but by his ordinary dispensation and prouidence: that is to say, that he doth truly and by his determinate purpose harden, make blinde, giue vp into a reprobate sence, leade into temptation, and euery other thinge like vnto these. Such phrases of spæche are more oftner found in the Scriptures, then that any other way of expounding them is rashly to be deuised: which thinge *Augustine* also noted in his fifth booke and third Chapter against *Iulianus*. And yet for all this it followeth not heer by, that the sinnes of men so by God hardned, blinded &c. are to be imputed vnto him. Which poynte w^e by certaine substauntiall reasones will make plaine and manifest.

First: Although it be God that doth moue and incline the hart either vnto god or euill, yet there remaineth in man, as we haue before specified, a will, which is no doubt the singular gift of God bestowed vpon man. Now whereas man doth shamefully abuse this will of his, doubtles he doth it by his owne default. For whilest by his owne will he adicteth himselfe

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selfe to the filthy affections of his corrupt nature, labouring with his whole harte after euill, & therein not a little delighting himselfe: in this case I say, whilest he obeyeth himselfe rather then God (whome it would especially please & delight, if man would craue his ayde and holy spirite) who either will or may excuse man so doing, and lay the fault or blame vpon God? As touching this matter, we haue a notable example in *Iudas*, who albeit he were by Gods ordinance apointed to betray the sonne of man, as *Christ* himselfe doth manifestly declare: yet notwithstanding could he not so escape, but that the guilte and condemnation lighted vpon his owne head. For whereas he harkened vnto the deuill, prompting him to enterprise so hainous a facte, and he bent his whole will and study to accomplish so horrible a treason, by going of his owne accorde to the aduersaries the *Pharisees* consulting about the matter, by requiring a reward for his labour, by seeking occasion and opportunity to commit that mischeuous dedde, in crauing the aide of armed soldiers to assist him, in prescribing the time, place, manner and token vnto them, and finally in deliuering him into their handes: wherein vndoubtedly he sinned most greuously, and made him selfe guiltie of eternall damnation,

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tion, euen Chriſt him ſelf alſo giuing teſtimony therof, when he ſaith : Woe vnto that man by whome the ſonne of man is betrayed : it had beene good for that man, if he had neuer been borne : *Math. 26.* Whither belongeth alſo the confeſſion of *Iudas* him ſelf, ſaying : I haue ſin-
 nen in betraying the innocent blood. So ought we to iudge in like maner of *Peter*, vnto whōe the very ordinance of God was alſo made ma-
 niſeſt by Chriſt, to wit, that he ſhould thrice deny him. Which thing he did, and that not ſimply, but by adding two of othes and curſings ſo farre did the will put forth it ſelfe.

The ſame man being admoniſhed by the ſigne of the Tocke crowing, acknowledged his ſinne, and confeſſed him ſelfe guiltie, bewailing his offence with many teares. Therfore it is mans owne wil and not Gods ordinance that maketh ſinners guiltie. Neither is there any cauſe why a new action ſhould be commenced againſt God, as though he were to be blamed in this, that he gaue vnto man a will, which he foreknew he would abuſe. For why? albeit he fore-knewe that he would abuſe it, yet he gaue it not to this end that he ſhould abuſe it, and beſides he gaue (at what time man was firſt created) a moſte noble freedom of will, wherby he might (if he had liſted) euen by his
 owne

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owne strength and power, rightly haue vsed his will. For God foreseeing that he would abuse it, foresaw withall by what meanes he might raise him by againe beinge salne, and how by doinge of it he might illustrate and set forth his power and goodnes. And whilest he is occupied in the execution heerof, he cannot be iudged to deale otherwise then iustlye and well. Wherefore also when God prouideth that any man shall fall, he doth wel notwithstanding, inasmuch as he disposeth al thinges by his certaine and profitable counsell: but in the meane season, because man committeth euill, not in respect of Gods prouidence, and as one executing the will of God, and desiring to honoꝛ God by that meanes, but rather to satisfie his owne will and pleasure, therefore (I say) is God exempted from all spot of blame, and man only found guilty of sinne.

Secondly: It seemeth that this also may not be sarde amisse, that like as Gods foreknowledge is not deceined, so neither in like maner can his prouidence be deceined. Whereby it commeth to passe, y^e God doth prouide and ordaine such thinges, as vnto the which he foreknoweth mans will (so farre forth as in him lyeth) to be most vehemently inclyned and disposed. But sith God is in no wise so

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bound vnto man, as that he should let his wil,
and drawe it perforce (striving to the contra-
ry) vnto god: he is not to be accused or found
fault with, in that he leaueth him to his own
counsell, and permitteth him to fulfil his own
peruerse will, which he foreknew would so
come to passe. But if so be a man will stil rea-
son the matter with god, and say, that he doth
not sufficiently regard man his creature, and
for that cause thinke him worthy to be accu-
sed of neglecting his mercy, euen heere it may
be answered, that God doth by this meanes
shew forth his iustice, wherof he is to haue no
lesse consideration the of his mercy. For God
dealeth by right, whilste he leueth euen him
that is voide of all euill sinne, in those dregs
of uncleannes wherin he is borne. Neither
hath man any thing in him selfe, for which he
is worthy to be holpen.

Thirdly: Albeit God & man doe put their
handes both together to one and the selfsame
thing, yet because God doth it far otherwise
and to a far other end then man, it cometh
to passe that man therfore is taken tardy, and
God free from all blame, yea, he procureth to
himselke therby, praise and glozy. God wor-
keth and ordaineth some notable wicked men
to escape all danger for a time, which perse-
cute

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cute the Godly, and exercise all maner of crueltie against them: but he dooth it to the end he may make afterward as wel his power, as his goodnes and iustice to become the moze glorious: his power (I say) and goodnes, in the wonderfull deliuering of them afterward whom they afflicted: and his iustice, in destroying citsones the wicked tirants themselves. Againē such men worke, but bending all their will and endeuour vnto euil, and studiously hardening their owne hartes, to the intent they may euery way, against all right and equitie oppresse the godly and innocent. An example of this thing we haue in *Pharao*, whom God stirred vp to this end and purpose, as it is saide. *Rom. 9.* that he might shewe in him his power, and that his name might be declared in all the earth. And of *Pharao* we heare euery where in *Exodus*, that he hardened his owne hart, that he sought diuers waies to hinder the people of God, &c. Neither is that much vnlke vnto this which we finde reported of the kings of *Babylon*, whom God in like maner stirred vp as his instruments to punish the *Israelites*, but they in the meane time fulfilled their owne lust in their tirannious enterprises, & did many thinges in despight of God for which cause also they were by him suppressed.

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ted and ouerthrowne. It would be over long to recite all the examples that tend to this purpose. And this is a certaine trueth, that God, as he dooth fashion, sanctifie, and prepare some, euen in their mothers wombe, to the execution of some notable exploitcs, like as we read of *Iacob*, *Jeremy* and *Iohn Baptist*: so also he preparcth othersome to other woorkes, and stirreth vp their willes after ward, to performe that which is appointed them to doe: but all to god and profitable ends, which they look not after, and which mans vnderstanding cannot attaine vnto, further forth then they are expresse in the Scriptures. So *Esaie*, before he was borne, was hated of the Lord, and by him ordained to forgoe the blessing. Likewise God woorketh, and some he casteth vp sometimes into a reprobate minde: but in this pointe whilest he punisheth their former mallice, wherby they wold not acknowledge the trueth offered, or being known would needs set it at naught, nay violentlye oppresse it, certes in this case he deserueth the praise and commendation of iustice. Again on the other side, such men woork, but heaping one sinne vpon an other, and graeuing continually the spirit of God by their obstinacie in euil doing. Touching this woork of God, and likewise

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wise of euill men, it is thus witten *Rom. 1.*
Therefore because that when they knew God,
they glorified him not as God, neither were
thankfull, &c. God also gaue them vp to their
owne hartes lustes, vnto vncleannes, to defile
their owne bodies betweene themselves, &c.
Where is to be obserued this particule, to their
owne hartes lust, because therby is noted the
proper mallice of those men, for y^e which they
are woꝛthely blamed. *Rom. 11.* out of *Esa. 6.*
God hath giuen them the spirit of slumber: eies
that they should not see, and eares that they
should not heare vnto this day. *2. Thes. 2.* The
comming of that man of sinne, is with all decei-
uablenes of vnrighteousnes among them that
perrishe, because they receiued not the loue of
the trueth that they might be saued. And ther-
fore God shall sende them strong delusion,
that they should beleue lyes, that al they might
be damned which beleued not the trueth, but
had pleasure in vnrighteousnes. To be short,
God woꝛketh, but yet so as he tickleth the
minde of him whom he moueth, to the intent
that so soone as he perceiueth himselfe to be a-
ny way prouoked vnto euill, he may haue oc-
casion to acknowledge his owne weaknes, to
craue and call for Gods help, and (at a word)
to beleue vndoubtedly that he shall obtayne

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it. So *Paule*, when there was giuen vnto him a prick in the fleshe, the messenger of *Sathan* to buffet him, *2. Corinth. 12.* he tooke occasion thereby to pray often: and when he obtayned not the same to be taken from him, he was taught thereby that it was sent vnto him for his great profit, to wit, that he should not be exalted out of measure through y abundance of reuelations. God woorketh, but yet moderately, and least a man should be tempted aboue his strength, that so he may be holpen in due time. God woorketh, but so as he may the more gloriously lift him vp that is lowly fallē, heale him that is wounded, and exalte him that is humbled. God woorketh in the *Chaldies. Iob. 1.* and in *Semes, 2. Sam. 16.* but it was to proue the manifold strength as well of *Iob* as of *Dauid*, and that dooth both *Iob* and *Dauid* confesse, the one saying, The Lord hath giuen, and the Lord hath taken away, the other forbidding y partie to be hindered, and expressly adding, That the Lord had giuen *Semes* in charge, so to curse and blasphemie. God woorketh in the thief & man slayer, but it is to the intent to deliuer the partie wrongfully troubled or slaine out of far greater miseries, and to translate him into eternall life: to the intent also that the Prince or Judge may haue iust.

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inſt matter and occaſion to puniſh the male-
factoꝝ with due paines and penalties of lawe,
that many of the common people which haue
not offended in like ſort. may take example by
him that is puniſhed, to beware of the like e-
nozmities: to conclude, ſoꝝ other good and pro-
fitable cauſes, which all we in no wiſe are a-
ble to diſcuſſe. In ſumme, God doth all in all
euen in euill and wicked men, yet iuſtly and
to a good end. But the thinges that in theſe
ſelfe ſame actions are committed of men, oꝝ
els of the deuill (ſoꝝ that we may note this al-
ſo by the way, it is not abſurde, if we ſay that
God, men, and the Deuill doe worke together
to one and the ſelfe ſame thing: which thing
is to be ſeen in the betraying of Chriſt, where
the Lord had appointed it ſo to be, then Sa-
than entred into the hart of *Iudas*, and *Iudas*
wayting his opportunity committed the deed.
likewiſe in *Iob*, where the Lord worketh, then
next *Sathan* and the *Chaldeans* doe egregiouſ-
ly play their partes: wherby it commeth to
paſſe, that as God is ſaide to harden, ſo is the
ſame power attributed vnto man to wit. that
he hardeneth him ſelfe. *Pſal. 94.* Harden not
your hartes. and againe the deuill is ſaide to
woork in the vnbeleeuers, *2. Corinth. 4. Ephes. 2*
whither we haue reſpect to the manner, oꝝ to

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the ende, do sauour of nothing els but euill, they tend to no other purpose then euill, and they do all thinges euery where (if not openly, yet at the least priuily) against the glozy of God and against the profit of their neighbour. Which thinges seeing they stand thus, doubtlesse the blame and blemishe of all euill reboundeth vpon man and the deuill: and God doth euermore retaine and keepe the praise of Iustice, godnes, power, and other such like excellent vertues. And holsoeuer God worketh in these matters, yet hath man no iust cause of moeruing, neither can he pretend the iust and good ordinance of God to couer his owne mallice and vnrighteousnes. To this point we must of necessitie come at the length and confesse, that because God so willet, and because he willet nothing but good, therfore he cannot deale or work otherwise then well. Hence is that *Rom. 9.* Why dooth he yet complain? For who hath resisted his wil? But, o man, who art thou, that pleadest with God? Shal the pot say to the potter, why hast thou made me of this fashion? &c.

Fourthly: Sinne can in no wise be imputed vnto God, but it is imputed vnto man: because god is subiect to no lawes against which he might be conuicted to offend: but vnto man
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ther is a law alwaies prescribed by the which he is reprobued of sinne and brought to the knowledge of sinne. And so, although God be after his manner autho^r of the wo^rke, yet is he not autho^r of the sinne. Now then it is a very easie matter to answer to the other cauillations, as namely, wherfoze man should be punished, and drawne (as it were) to the place of execution. Doubtlesse seeing he committeth euill of his owne will, seeing that as well all the matter of euill is found to be in him, as also that he hath respect to an euill end in his actions, and seeing also that he transgresseth the law prescribed vnto him: wo^rthilye is he drawne befoze the Iudge (being the minister of Gods iustice, and the instruement ordained of God fo^r the preservation of publique peace in the fellowship and societie of men) who is to punish him according to the qualitie of his offence. And thus much fo^r the second obiection against peculiar o^r particular prouidence may suffice.

In the third place we are to entreate of secondary causes, which it appa^reth to be all cleane wiped away, if euery of these inferiour thinges heere belowe be done and dispatched by the wil and prouidence of God himself: and yet that they should be remoued out of y^e way, neither

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neither is it a thing vsuall, neither doth any reason permit or suffer them so to be. We answere briefly that as touching secondarie causes, which are otherwise called inferiour causes, we will set them in their right place: but according as both the manner of the word and the nature of the relation doth require, we must of necessity reduce them to an other first and higher cause, which is God himselfe, so that, albeit they may seeme to worke and serue to our vse, yet we must vnderstand that they cannot do or effect any thing, but so farre forth as they receiue and participate their whole force from the first cause, which alone and in very deede obtaineth of right the name of cause. (Whereupon also it hath pleased some to terme it the cause infinite, and cause of all causes.) For as the hammer of it self can in no wise make in yron any certain print or fashion of a Key, sawe, or such like thing, vnles the Smith him selfe do put both the hammer and the iron to the Anvile and ofte times strike vpon it: so must we perswade our selues, that neither in the second causes efficient, nor in the thinges hoped to be effected by them, any thing can follow or be brought to perfection, except God him selfe doth stirre vp, temper, and bring al things to their right and appointed

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ted end. And looke what accompt we make of
tooles oꝛ instrumentes, which we vse to apply
to the woꝝkmanſhip and making of any thing
whatſoeuer: and y ſelfe ſame regarde is to be
had with God of ſecond oꝛ ſecondary cauſes,
(as we call them.) Foꝛ why the instruments
of themſelues are nothing els then idle and
vnpꝛoſitable, and ſcarce woꝝthy (if we conſi-
der them well) the name of cauſes: vnleſſe
peraduenture as the hammer oꝛ ſaw may af-
ter a ſoꝛt be called cauſes, which yet are not ſo
to be taken foꝛ cauſes, as if a table oꝛ foꝛme oꝛ
any ſuch like thing be wel & artificially made,
any pꝛaiſe oꝛ reward ſhould retorne vnto the
as the which all men do know that they nei-
ther can woꝝke oꝛ are able to do any thing,
but what and how much the craſtesman him-
ſelfe will haue oꝛ cauſe them to do. And ſo
are we to iudge of all other thinges. Foꝛ take
me an hearbe alſo oꝛ any other like thing that
is good foꝛ phyſick, & albeit it may ſeem to haue
eſpecial vertue againſt ſome certaine kinde of
diſeaſe, and beeing vſed may peraduenture
helpe the ſick partie, yet in very deede it com-
meth to paſſe by the woꝝkmanſhip of God,
who doth woꝝk effectually by the hearb. Foꝛ
pꝛooſe hèreof this may ſerue, that the ſame
hearbe otherwiſe beeing applyed, vnto ſome
other

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other that is infected with the like disease, doth no good to the curing of it: and whence commeth this, but because the Lord there refuseth to work by it? So farre forth is a medicine neuer holesomely applyed, but when it pleaseth the Lord him selfe to worke with it. **W**herupon also it commeth to passe, that oftentimes a man recovereth his health, by that thing that he least thought off, and all because the Lord worketh with it, howsoever otherwise it seemeth in no wise to be prepared for that vse. So where the Lord Iesus spitted vpon the ground, and made clay, and put it to the eyes of the blinde, that clay of it selfe did nothing toward the restoring of the sight: for who euer vsed such a medicine? but yet there it did good and preuailed, because it pleased the Lord to adde his strength to that outward signe. And in like manner we see other oftentimes to be healed, by taking this or that thing, which yet was neuer thought to haue any force or strength in it against the present disease.

Wherfore all secondary causes are in very vaine only (as ye would say) certaine tooles or instrumentes, yet such as are neuer forcible to worke, but when the Lord him selfe giueth strength vnto them. But this is to be marked
of

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of vs, that secondary causes are not in enerye respect like vnto tooles: for these are such, as without them the artificer can doo nothing. For why, except hee haue his hammer, sawe, chyp-are, and such like instruemēts he is compelled to cease, as neuer able with his fingers or nayles alone to heawe the timber, nor to plaine the bordes. But God for his part, can without the helpe of any second causes, bring to passe at all times whatsoever it pleaseh him. For hence it is, that so many thinges happen which we account for miracles, because that in them, whither it be the healing of the sicke, or any other vnusuall thinge be done, we can see in no second causes to concurre, as otherwise among men are commonly vsed. Hence likewise it is, that so many great thinges come to passe suddenly and besides the expectation of men: as for example, when we see all thinges in a readines to war, and now the banners to be displayed, the standards erected, and the battailes fully bent to ioyne together, yet (beholde) no man once dreaming of any such matter, peace is suddenly proclaimed, the armes on either side dismissed and sent away, &c. Again on the other side, when there appeared most certaine hope of peace to be continued, even then haue risen
vp,

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other that is infected with the like disease, doth no good to the curing of it: and whence commeth this, but because the Lord there refuseth to worke by it? So farre forth is a medicine neuer holesomely applyed, but when it pleaseth the Lord him selfe to worke with it. Whereupon also it commeth to passe, that oftentimes a man recouereth his health, by that thing that he least thought off, and all because the Lord worke with it, howsoever otherwise it seemeth in no wise to be prepared for that vse. So where the Lord Iesus spitted vpon the ground, and made clay, and put it to the eyes of the blinde, that clay of it selfe did nothing toward the restoring of the sight: for who euer vsed such a medicine? but yet there it did good and preuailed, because it pleased the Lord to adde his strength to that outward signe. And in like manner we see other oftentimes to be healed, by taking this or that thing, which yet was neuer thought to haue any force or strength in it against the present disease.

Therefore all secondary causes are in very deede only (as ye would say) certaine tooles or instrumentes, yet such as are neuer forcible to worke, but when the Lord him selfe giueth strength vnto them. But this is to be marked of

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of vs, that secondary causes are not in enerye respect like vnto tooles: for these are such, as without them the artificer can doo nothing. For why, except hee haue his hammer, sawe, chip-are, and such like instruemēts he is compelled to cease, as neuer able with his fingers or nayles alone to heaue the timber, nor to plaine the wordes. But God for his part, can without the helpe of any second causes, bying to passe at all times whatsoever it pleaseeth him. For hence it is, that so many thinges happen which we account for miracles, because that in them, whither it be the healing of the sicke, or any other vnusuall thinge be done, we can see in no second causes to concurre, as otherwise among men are commonly bled. Hence likewise it is, that so many great thinges come to passe suddenly and besides the expectation of men: as for example, when we see all thinges in a readines to war, and now the banners to be displaied, the standards erected, and the battailes fully bent to ioyne together, yet (beholde) no man once dreameing of any such matter, peace is sodenly proclaimed, the armes on either side dismissed and sent away, &c. Againē on the other side, when there appeared most certaine hope of peace to be continued, euen then haue risen
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bp, and no man knowing how oꝛ by whome, horrible stirres and tumultes. In all which thinges the only pꝛouidence of God woꝛketh all in all, and that without the help of any secondary causes appꝛearing vnto vs.

Therfoꝛe what things soeuer come to passe throughout the whole woꝛlde, it is certayne, that they are done and accomlished by God him selfe: and if at any time secondary causes doe some to woꝛke any thing at all, yet are they nought els but vnꝛofitable toles, without strength, and of no foꝛce in them selues. And verily when God vseth the ministerie of them, he doeth it (doubtlesse) moze foꝛ our cause, then foꝛ his owne. Foꝛ why, that he is able to bꝛing to passe without them whatsoeuer it pleaseth him, there is no man that can deny. But foꝛ this cause his pleasure is oftentimes to woꝛke by them, to wit, that his diuine power woꝛking in thinges visibler, may put foꝛth it selfe the moze clærely to be seen and that we might be admonished therby and driuen (as manifestly conuicted) to confesse, that the deuine aide is diuers & sundꝛy waies and at all times pꝛesent with vs, and that there is nothing in the whole woꝛld so small, oꝛ albeit, created in vaine, but that from euery thing that is, there floweth one commoditie

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tie oꝛ other either vnto man, oꝛ vnto other
things, according as the diuine providence of
God hath appointed and ordained. For our
sakes therfore it is, that in secondary oꝛ infe-
rior causes the force of Gods power and good-
nes doth vtter and declare it selfe, and not for
Gods cause him selfe, who dooth at no hand
stand in need of their aide oꝛ helpe. For like as
when any pcece of worke cunningly and arti-
ficially made is set forth openlye to be seene,
there the crafterman him selfe is praised and
commended of all the beholders, and not this
oꝛ that toole oꝛ instruement which he vsed in
making of it: so in all things that come to
passe heere belowe, albeit they may seeme to
be accomplished by secondary causes (as they
are vsually tearmed) yet if there be any good-
nes and excellency in them, the providence and
goodnes of God him selfe ought especialllye to
be considered and commended, yea and al the
praise and thanks giuing is to be ascribed
vnto God him selfe, and not vnto any second
oꝛ inferior causes. Wherefore we do not wil-
lingly graunt vnto secondary causes þe roome
and authoritie which they deserue: but in the
mean season this we would haue to be grai-
ted againe vnto vs, that whatsoever seemeth
to be wrought oꝛ accomplished by them, may
be

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be ascribed vnto God alone as to the chiefe and principall anthoz: inasmuch as they without him can doo nothing, but contrariwise he without them is well able to doo all things. And thus is concluded that which was saide of vs at the beginning, namely that God doth all in all in euery thing, and that his prouidence necessarily stretcheth it selfe euen to the least thinges that are brought to passe in this lower part of the worlde, and not simpley stretche it selfe vnto them, but also exactly gouerneth and administreth euery thing. But I thought good to ad heerunto certain woordes of *S. Augustine* as touching second or inferior causes, and touching the force of Gods power woorking in all thinges, for so much as they doo wonderously well agree to this present treatise of ours. Thus therfore in his 7. booke de Ciuitate Dei, Cap. 29. disputing against the that would referre the causes of all thinges to the worlde it selfe & the partes therof. and also to certain peculiar and chosen Gods, amongst other thinges he saith. We worshipping that God (saith he) that apointeth to the creatures by him created both the beginnings and endes of their being and mouing; which hath in him self, knoweth, and disposeth the causes of thinges: which hath made and created the vertue of seedes:

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seeds: which hath put a reasonable soule, which is called the minde, into what living creatures it pleased him: which hath giuen them the power and vse of speech: which hath imparted to what spirits hee would the office of telling things to come, and by whom it pleseth him he foretellet things to come, & by whom he pleseth he driueth away diseases: which ruleth the beginnings, proceedings, and endings of warres also themselves, accordingly as mankinde is to be corrected and amended: which hath both created and also ruleth and gouerneth the most vehement and violent fire of this worlde, according to the temperature of his vnmeasurable nature: which is both the creator and gouernor of the waters throughout the whole earth: which hath made the Sunne the cleereſt of all corporall lightes, and hath giuen vnto it answerable power and mouing: which stretcheth his rule and dominion euen to hell it selfe and the infernall spirits: which ministreth seede and nourishment both moist and dry according to the seuerall natures and dispositions of his creatures: which founded the earth and maketh it fruitfull: which giueth the fruites thereof both to men and beastes: which knoweth and ordereth not only the principall causes of thinges but also the subsequent and inferiour: which appointeth to the Moone her course and motion:

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which discouereth the waies of heauenlye and earthly things by the interchangings of places: which hath graunted to the wittes and capacities of men that he hath made, the knowledge also of diuers and sundry artes to the adorning and beautifying of life and nature: which hath ordained the coniunction of male and female, to the better propagation of issue and posteritie: which hath fauourablye graunted to the companies and societies of men, the benefite of earthly fire, which they might applye to most easye vses, as to warme them in their houses, to giue them light, &c. according to their seuerall necessities. *Whitherto are the wordes of Saint Augustine.*

Whereby it may appere, how fond and shamefull the canillations of some men are, wherby they goe about to subuert and ouerthrowe particular prouidence. If it be so (say they) that all things are ordered by Gods prouidence, then in vaine shall we labour and take paines in any thing, and in vaine shall our counsailes and consultations be: which yet that they are both necessarily and profitably bled, very reason and nature it selfe doth teach vs all. If it be appointed of God (say they) that we shall haue good successe in any matter, it shall not be needfull for vs to take
any

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any care, neither to bestowe any labour or diligence in prouiding such thinges as we think to be necessary for vs: but if it be decreed that we shall haue no good successe, then heer againe shall all thinges be attempted in baine of vs. Wherefore he that perceiueth any dangers to hang ouer his head, shall not take counsel, how he may auoid them: he that heareth tel that the way is beset with thæues, shall not enquire after any other way wherein he might walke, neither tarry for any to beare him company: he that feareth the danger of some contagious sicknes, wherewith he seeth others to be infected, shall not refraine the companye of the diseased, neither shall he take any preservation by the counsell of the phisition: he that seeth his house on fire and ready to fall on his head, or a gulf of waters breaking through the banks with great force to rush vpon him, shall not look which way he may escape: he that is alreadye set in the midst of dangers, and either taken of his enemies, or atteynted with sicknes, shall not prouide for his deliuerance, neither craue the help of physick. Nay further God shall not be called vpon by prayer, nor sought vnto, to the intent we might obtaine any thing of him, when as we are sure y nothing can come to passe, but that

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which he hath once decreed. In summe, it shall be sufficient for a man once in all his life to commend him selfe wholly vnto God: and then with hault and bolde courage to look for whatsoeuer he shall send: for why in this case there remaineth nothing els for man to do. With these and such like cauils (I say) a sort of ignorant men seek to suppress particular prouidence: but he shall easily ouerthrow the, that will heedfullye consider of those thinges that haue hitherto of vs been saide. But ouer and besides, we will adde certaine reasons clere and manifest, whereby we will shewe, that euen secondary causes (when the case so requireth) are in no wise to be contemned or neglected, and yet neuertheless that God worketh all in all in them.

First: We must perswade our selues, that those causes and all other helpes and remedies besides are giuen vs of God him self: and look by what prouidence it is ordained, that we should fall into dangers, and stand in need of many thinges, and by the same also it is appointed, that we should vse secondary causes, and be holpen by them. For as it is ordained of God, that we should be pined with hunger, pinched with thirst, frozen with colde, distressed with diuers diseases, and oftentimes fall
into

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into sundry perrilles and perplexities: so is it appointed again of God, that we should sowe and moue our lands, prouide water or other kinds of drink, get skins, lether, linnen, & wol- len for apparel. giue diligence to learn phisick.

Secondly: It serueth to this purpose, that God hath instilled into euery thing y^e he hath created certaine secret and peculiar vertues, which we cannot perceiue in like maner to be in other things. So we see corn or grain pro- perly to qualifie hunger, water to quench thirst, this hearbe for this vse, an other for that, &c. in most excellēt order prouided. But all espe- cially to serue the vse of man, as Lord & King appointed ouer al creatures: whose parte it is in such wise to vse thē, as y^e he may apply eue- ry thing to those speciall purposes, for y^e which they were properly made, and not out of one and y^e selfe same thing to be in hope y^e he shall get all things: that is to say, that he shall not with meat goe about to quench his thirst, nor take drink to slake his hunger, &c. Now thē if euery thing be in this wise created vnto pro- per and peculiar vses, what auaileth it y^e they should be so created, if a man vse thē not to y^e same ends & purposes? Thirdly: this also is to be obserued, as woorthy of admiratiō, namely. y^e ther is no land or cuntry any wher extant, w^{ch} byingeth

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bryngeth not forth what soeuer thinges are necessary, to maintaine the life of men, and of other creatures, wherof there is greatest vse. Againe no liuing creature so small, wherunto God hath not engrafted a care to pzeferue it selfe, and also some sence and feeling by one meanes or other to auoide the thinges that it seeth to be against it. And wherfore is it thus (I pray you) but because man should understand, that he is altogether left without excuse, if (as oft as necessitie so require) he vse not the helpes that are pzovided, and strue not to helpe and further him selfe by them?

Fourthly: For the selfesame cause hath God giuen vnto man wit and reason, wherby he might discerne betwene thinges to be eschewed and thinges to be desired: he hath bestowed vpon him the knowledge of many thinges, diuers and sundry excellent artes, the obseruation and experience of manifolde actes and exploites. Finally he hath ministred vnto man all necessary furniture. wherby to procure good thinges, and to auoide the contrary. Wherfore then should he not (by applying the commoditie of those secondarpe causes to him selfe) make vse of these notable giftes of God?

Fiftly, It is to be obserued, that God him selfe

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selfe dooth oft times (when as strange and vnaccustomed perrilles do happen, whereby man is made amazed and perplexed) priuily and (as it were) by secret inspiration minister convenient and rare, likewise strange and vnaccustomed counsailes and instructions by which the wofull wight being almost past hope of recovery is yet still deliuered and continued. Which when it so falleth out, it is a plaine case that this is Gods will, that we should vse aright (and when need is) secondary causes, inasmuch as he ordereth and disposeth them all at his pleasure.

Sixtly : This also is the cause, why God would haue man to be ignozant of thinges to come, and not priuie to his diuine counsels, namely that he being plunged in some present perill, and not knowing what the issue of it will be, may learne to flye to the remedies prouided of God, and so in due time by faith to waite for Gods helpe effectuallye working in them.

Seuenthly : And thus forsooth will God haue man to haue recourse vnto second causes, wherein he him selfe worketh, and which he hath appointed to certaine bles for all euents and purposes, insomuch that he accounteth him selfe to be tempted wth great reproche

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When a man in present perrill refuseth to vse such proper and peculier remedies as are ready and at hand for the nonce. So if thou runnest not away, when thou seest thy house at the point to fall vpon thy head, (thou at least wise being able, and God hauing giuen thee strong legges and fete to that end) doubtlesse thou makest thy selfe guilty of sinne.

It is euident therfore, that secondary causes (sith they are ordained of God him selfe, and the necessitie of mans life requireth them) are in no wise to be neglected or despised: and yet in the mean time, not further forth available, then it pleaseth God him selfe to worke in them. And so we may see oftentimes, that being vsed in time they doe much good, as when one escapeth by flight, another is holpen by taking of medicines, another defended by armour and weapon, another obtaining his desire by praying vnto God, to be short, some other escaping by some other means from danger either present or imminent, and all because it pleaseth the Lord to worke together with those secondary causes. Againne on the other side, we see oftentimes other to attempte all the like thinges, as namely to endeuor to save themselves by flight, to call for the Physician and carefullie to obey his preceptes, to take

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take by armour and weapon, to intreat God for his helpe, finally to leaue nothing vnate[m]pted, and yet notwithstanding to sticke continuallye in daunger, and at the length miserably to perrishe: and that for no other cause, then for that the Lord doth not put to his helping hand. Again we may see some set in the midst of the flaming fire, compassed about on euery side with the outcries and dead coarces of sick and diseased persons, beset with naked swordes flashing about their eares, and lastly destitute of all outward helpe, and yet (when they least thought of any such matter) to be deliuered: and all this forsooth because the Lord (euen without the ministry of secondary causes) worketh and accomplisheth whatsoeuer it pleaseth him. Wherefore let vs so esteeme of secondary causes as they deserue, and by no meanes refuse them: but yet with all we must hold this, that God disposeth and dispatcheth all in all.

That neither Fate or destiny can stand, nor chance or fortune, nor contingens or happen-hazard be graunted, where there is due knowledg had of Gods prouidence, and the same esteemed according to the dignitie therof. *Cap. 5.*

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Now the order of teaching requireth, that we proceede vnto other questions, such namely as doe rise about fate or destiny, about fortune and chaunce, and about Contingens or happe-hazard. And first we will speake of fate or destiny.

We are to know therfoze, that some when they heare vs to commend prouidence and to affirme it to be so busily occupied about euery thing, doe by and by (that they may the better defend their vniuersall prouidence which they rest vpon) very disdainefully exclaime against vs, that we set abroach the selfe same thinges, and (as ye would say) fetch them backe from hell into Christian Churches, which the idle philosophers are wont to handle as touching fate or destiny in their scholes and cloysters. *Augustine* in his worke against the two epistles of the *Pelagians*, Book 2. Chap. 5. maketh mention, that there was on a time so much as this comes too obiected against him, for because he affirmed y grace came not by works or merits, but only by the god will and pleasure of God, who hath mercy on whom he wil and whom he will he hardeneth. Neither is it obscure to know, what the thinges are that the Philosophers haue put forth touching fate or destiny.

First

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First of all they haue defined fate, as *Cicero* reporteth in his 2. booke of *Divination*, to be an order and course of causes, when one cause begetteth another in it selfe. And there in the same place *Cicero* intending more expressely to describe the force of fate, addeth, That it is an euermlasting trueth flowing from all eternitie, Which sith it is so, there is nothing doone that was not to be doone: and in like maner nothing to be doone, wherof nature containeth not effectuell causes to bring it to passe. Wherby we are giuen to vnderstand, that it is not Fate which superstitiously, but which physically is saide, to be the euermlasting cause of things why both the things that are past were doone, and the things that be present are doone, and things that are to come shall be doone, And so it commeth to passe, that by obseruation it may be marked, what thing for the most parte followeth euery cause, although not alwaies, (for that were very hard to affirme) and that the selfesame probable causes of things to come are seene of those, that either in madnes, or in sleep doo beholdethem. *Hitherto Cicero,*

There is extant also a definition of fate, in *Gellius* in his 6. booke and 2. chap. put forth by *Chrysippus* a principall pillar of the *Stoicall* discipline. For he defineth it to be, A certaine naturall

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naturall course or order of all things following one an other from eternitie, and the same folding & wrapping together of things remaining vchangeable. In which two places vndoubtedly there s^eme some things to be contained, which doe not agree amisse to Gods prouidence, as it hath of vs also oftentimes heretofore bene described. But besides there are two other opinions rehearsed of *Cicero* in his booke de Fato, of the Philosophers touching Fate. The one of those that thought all things to come to passe by Fate, so as that Fate should bring necessitie: in which opinion were *Democritus*, *Heraclitus*, *Empedocles*, *Aristotle*. Whereupon came this to be in the mouthes of many, Inevitable fatum. The other of those, vnto whom it s^emed that without any Fate the motions of mens mindes are voluntary. With whome also this distinction was vsuall: that in some things it might truly be saide, when the certaine causes were gone before, that they are not in our power, but that they must of necessitie come to passe wherof they were causes: but in some things, though the causes were gone before, yet that it is in our power, that they should otherwise come to passe, and that those things soe sooth doe properly come to passe by Fate or fatally, but from

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from these that fate is absent. Further of these two opinions all for the most parte doe especially condemne the former: but the latter (inasmuch as it maketh the motions of mindes voluntary & free, exempting the from the power and iurisdiction of fate) they doe the rather approue: and we which acouch particular prouidence (they say) doe intend againe to establish y^e former assertion, and as for the libertie of will (which yet that they might keepe safe, it pleaseth them only to allowe of vniuersall prouidence) that we vtterly take it away: and that so our meaning is againe to iustifie and vpholde that philosophicall doggrin touching fate, which hath already been reiect- ed of all men. Moreover in the word fate and in the sundry names therof, especiallye among the *Greekes*, the whole force (in a man- ner) of Gods prouidence (such as we affirme it to be) seemeth to be expressed of the ancient writers: so that now nothing is thought to let; but that aswel in opinion as in flat termes we doe fully agree in all pointes with them.

For first they will haue *Fatum* to be deri- ued from the *Werbe Fando*, to speake, as wit- nessedh *Varro* in his 5. booke de *Lingua Latina*, and so by the word fate they plainely insu- mate into all mens mindes, that it is nothing
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els, then that which is decreade in the minde of God, and (that it might vncchangeably come to passe) as ye would say by expresse voice declared and pronounced.

And this is the very same in effect which we call pꝛouidence. The word Fate seemeth not to differ much from those phrases of Scripture euery where extant, God spake the word, thus saith the Lord, and such like : by all which the sence and meaning of Gods pꝛouidence and power is made manifest vnto all men. But of the *Grecians* Fate or Destiny is adozned with many tytles, wherof euery one doth after a sorte set before our eyes somewhat, wherby the dispensation and power of the diuine pꝛouidence is moze cōerly laid open vnto vs.

Crysippus interpreteth it to be *Pepromenen*, called as you would say *Peperasmenen*, (that is to say) limited & brought to an end, because that by it all thinges are finished and determined. *Peratoo*, is as much to say as *termino*, to finish or conclude. And *Eimarmenen* as ye would say *Eiromenen*, that is to say, knit and folded together, because the causes are knit betwē them selues. Wherupon also they haue termed it *Eirmon*, that is to say, an order or conuerſion. *Eiro*, is *necto*, to knit. Mozeouer it is called *Ananke akinetos*, y^e is, vnmoueable necessitie,

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necessitie, because that whatsoeuer is deterr'd
by Fate or Destiny, is of necessitie to be ac-
complished without any change or alteration.
Also *Nemesis*, because that it distributeth eue-
ry where aswell good thinges as bad. *Nemo*,
is as much to say as distribuo, divido, to distri-
bute or deuide. Likewise *Adrasteia*, for that no
man can escape or disappoint it. *Didrasco*,
is fugio, to flye or escape. When also *Moirs*,
for that it deuideth or parteth vnto all, *Meiros*
and *Moiras*, divido, is to parte or deuide.

Wherefore also they haue termed *Moiras*, the
same which we call *Parcas*, or Ladies of De-
stiny, forasmuch as they are Memerismenai,
that is to say distributed or deuided particu-
larly vnto euery one: which also are thre in
number, according to the thre partes or por-
tions of time, to wit, present, past, and to
come. And *Lachesis*, forsooth (being the name
of the first) hauing respect to the time to come,
willeth euery man to expect his lot & chaunce.
For *Lankano*, is as much to say as Sortior, to
giue or take lottes. *Atropos*, (the name of the
second) being as you would say irreuertibilis,
or vnreturnable, hath regarde to the times
past, which cannot be renok'd or called back,
Propoio and *Prepo*, verito, to turne. *Chlotho*,
(the third) is attributed vnto thinges present,
which

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which are by a perpetuall order rolled and whirled about. *Clotho*, circum volo, to turne about. These things (I say) and many more beside are vttered of the philosophers, as touching fate or destiny, and the same seem not to be a little conuenient to the setting forth of the dignitie of prouidence wherof we speake: wherby it commeth to passe, that some goe about to perswade the vnlearned, that we haue drauen those things, which we allcadge of Gods prouidence, especially particular, for the most part out of the booke of the Philosophers, or at leastwise that ours doe not much differ from their sayings, and that so the doctrine of the *Stoikes* touching fate is by vs thoroughly broched againe and reuiued. But we wil shew by certain very substantiall reasons, that there is no agreement betwene vs and the *Stoikes*, either as touching their opinion, or as touching their tearmes and titles.

1 And first in generall this we say, that the place concerning Gods prouidence is one of those, that the Philosophers haue most filthily defiled and corrupted, as they haue don all other in a manner wherin the chiefe points of our religion are comprized. Wherefore albeit they haue put forth some things aright touching Gods prouidence vnder the name of fate,

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state, yet haue they againe deuised many more (after their manner) utterly disagreeing from the trueth, for which cause we will by no meanes haue any fellowship or societie with them. If or how should they do otherwise that are destitute of Gods word, from which alone ought to be fetched a right iudgement touching high and heauenlye thinges: But we through Gods godnes haue that word of his, wherein is abundantlye reuealed aswell all trueth as also the nature of his diuine prouidence, and this word of his we safely follow.

2 If we haue weighed the matter aright, the Philosophers haue seperated their state from God, and haue propounded it to be considered as an odde thing without God and a part by it selfe: but we do in no case sonder God and his prouidence, but affirme it to be in God, yea and euen God himselfe, no other wise then in the holy Scriptures God is called the life, y truth, wisdom, &c. for they place y connexion or course of causes far off from the seate of God, and by it selfe, of it owne proper motion, and of it owne peculiar strength perpetually, (and as farre forth as may be) very orderly working vpon these inferior thinges: God in the mean time not once putting forth his hand vnto them, as he that is occupied
ly. only

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only in and about heauenly matters as in his owne proper seate and mansion. Neither that there is any great need, why he should trouble his maiestie about the thinges here belowe, sith it cannot be chosen but that all thinges shall fall out for the best, after that the whole care and administration therof be once committed to those connered causes. For in as much as they doe their office very well, and also obserue the order once prescribed them of God, it cannot be, but that according to their force in working, appointed effectes must followe : as when in clockes cunninglye made, the waightes are once drawen vp, the little wheelles by and by are turned about of their owne accord, and the Gnomon by little and little is moued to the point where it ought to be. But we being taught out of the Scriptures, doe teach that God himselfe worketh euery where, and reacheth forth his handes (if we may so speak) euen vnto euery thing that is : and that all thinges doe in no case so depēd vpon the labour of connered causes, but that without their helpes and ministratione very many notable thinges are wrought and accomplished by God in these inferior matters here belowe.

3 There are many other thinges touching
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Fate broched afterward by the Philosophers which agree not with the pure doctrine of Gods prouidence, neither can they by any meanes be reconciled together. Of which sorte is that especially (to omit the rest) which was before cyted out of *Cicero*, namely that it may be obserued by the vnwearied actions of causes connered or knitte together, what thing for the most part doth follow euery cause. This thing doubtlesse in this dispensation of things by Gods prouidence cannot be perceined, forasmuch as many thinges come to passe very oftentimes, in y^e which mans reason seeth no causes at all either principal or accessory: and of many great and mightie woorkes there can no other cause be rendred, then the good and vnreproueable will of the Lord. As no man knoweth the counsell of God, so are the causes of many thinges vnsearchable, and good reason, sith in very deed it were not expedient for a man alwaies to knowe them. In like manner, whither Fate woorketh in all things or whither mans will be exempted from the decrees therof, the Philosophers could neuer certainly determine, and that aswell because they were hindred by the darknes of the flesh alwaies erring in such matters, so as they could not discern the light of the trueth: as

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also for because they had not the rule & squire
of Gods word, without the which it is im-
possible that any sound and certain iudgment
should be giuen. Whereupon it came to passe,
that the Philosophers also theselues laughed
one another to scoorne in disputing about that
matter: which thing *Eusebius* in his 6. booke
touching the Preparation of the Gospell re-
porteth of *Oenomaus* the Cynick, who contem-
ned and disdainfully reproveth both *Democri-
tus* and *Crysippus*, yea and *Apollo Pythius* also
him selfe: the one forsooth, because he made
the most excellent parte of man altogether
bond and seruile, the other, for that he made it
self bond or half seruile: and *Apollo*, for because
whē he knew al other things, yet was he igno-
rant of what things we are the workers and
authors, and what thinges depend vpon the
execution of our will. The same man further
derideth the Philosophers, for that they could
not agree among themselues, whither *Eimer-
mene* or *Peptomene*, that is to say, fate or
Destenye were of God, or no, the one affir-
ming, the other againe denying: *Epicurus* at
the length (full wisely) concluding, that the
same is confected and made ex atomis erranti-
bus, that is, of wandring moles, passing to
and fro by the way, and sitting here and
there

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there on euery side. It would be ouer-long to recount and confute other things, wherin the Philosophers strining about fate did molte shamefully ouershote themselves. S. Augustine refelleth some of their errors in his woꝝke de Ciuitate Dei, Lib. 5, Cap. 8.9.10.11. and els where.

4 Neither again is it hereby concluded, that we are of one minde with the Stoikes, for that some of them haue confessed that by the name of fate they vnderstand God him self, and the will of God. In which sence Aristotle aswell in other places as in his booke de Mando, saith, that the only high God is called by diuers and sundry names, by reason of the diuers and sundry effectes which he woorketh, and amongst other names he attributeth vnto him also the titles of anankes, eimarmenes, pepronenes, adrasteias, &c. that is to say, of necessitie, fate or destiny, vengeance or reuengement, &c. And Seneca in his booke of Epistles 18. out of Clementes the Stoike reciteth these verses.

O Mighty Father ruler of the Skye, (please:
Lead and conduct me whither that thou
No cause of stay shall let me but that I,
will thee obey, behold I come with ease.
But put the case I were unwilling, yet
I follow must, although it greeue me sore;

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And beeing euill I must not stick nor let,
to doo the thing that lawfull was before:
Euen for the good i' accomplish euermore.
The fates doo lead the willing wight alwaies:
Th' unwilling eke they drawe to all affaires.

Where in the last wordes (as *S. Augustine* interpreteth them) *Seneca* most evidently calleth by the name of fates, that which in the first verse he had tearmed the will of the almighty father. The same *Seneca* in his 3. booke de Beneficijs, speaking of God. This same saith he, (meaning God) if thou shalt call him fate or destiny, thou shalt not doo amisse. For fate is nothing els then an inwrapped course of causes, and he is the first cause of all thinges, of whom the residue depend. Albeit therfore the *Stoikes* haue in this wise transferred the name of Fate vnto God him selfe, yet that it is neither fitly don, nor after that manner that we place prouidence in God, it is proued euen by their owne assertions, as they that do separate their connered or fatall causes farre off from God: besides that they deuise many other thinges touching fate, which to applye vnto God, were hainous wickednes. Whereby therfore it plainly appeereth, that the *Stoikes* doctrine of fate can by no meanes be compared

red

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red with the Euangelicall doctrine of Gods
prouidence. We will adde a further matter,
that euen the very name of fate is to be shut
out from amongst vs hērafter, if we couet to
retaine our religion in her naturall puritie.
For seeing that as oft as the name of fate is
heard, many absurdities doe forthwith seaze
vpon the mindes of all that heare it, and such
as are cleane contrary to the principles of true
Diuinitie, doubtlesse we are of that minde,
that the same can in no wise be admitted in-
to our congregations, without great feare of
dangerous infection, let it be reieced amongst
those prophane and vaine tanglinges, which
the Apostle 1. *Timoth.* 6. willet to be avoided
as also we see the holy fathers, especiall^y
Augustine, carefally to haue shunned it. Let
vs imprint in our minds the saying of y^e same
Augustine against them which out of the place
of *Iohn.* 8, No man could lay hands on him, be-
cause his hower was not yet come: would ther-
vpon inferre, that the Lord Christ was vnder
fate or destiny. If thine hart, saith he, were
not fond, thou wouldst not belecue Fate. And
that which *Nasianzen* in his oration touching
the care of the p^op^e, saith. That their happe is
miserable and their deuises frustrate, that will
take vpon them to teach chaunce, or Fortune,

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or

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or Fate. And thus much hitherto touching Fate.

Further the place admonisheth vs to shew that neither chaunce nor fortune hath any place, where the force of Gods prouidence is in some sorte weighed and considered. There is no nede here of any long disputation, specially sith none haue ouer much laboured to oppose or admire fortune or chaunce with the diuine prouidence of God. It is apparant enough, that the thinges falling out by fortune and chaunce are saide to be those, that doe sometimes happen accidentlye and besides mans expectation, which otherwise neuer or very seldome are wont to come to passe. And that which after this sorte happeneth vnto a man, that may deliberate and deal by aduice, they will haue it saide properly to be Fortu- rum, or a thing happening by fortune: as if a man digging in the felde to set or sowe, findeth a treasure: and that which happeneth to some other thing voide of reason, they ascribe to chaunce: as if a stone falling from y^e house top, killeth a Dog that passeth by. Wherfore curious men haue endeouored to searche and seeke whence these thinges should come, and why they should rather be thus then otherwise, when yet there is no doubt but they might

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might haue happened otherwise: and when they could not finde what causes to alleadge in such euentcs, they being overcome with admiration iudged, that it must of necessity be some diuine matter, and that called they fortune or chaunce, by little and little also making it a Goddesse, by whose beck and will the greatest part of mens affaires might be guided and gouerned. Whereupon also we reade that she was worshipped and honoured with diuine honours like vnto y other Gods: and the matter came to this point, that whatsoeuer prosperitie or aduersitie befell, men ascribed it only and alone to fortune, yea and it grew to be an vsuall speech, that then any thing was to fall out either well or ill, when it pleased fortune so to haue it. Hence sprung those speeches. If Fortune list and pleased be, I shall attaine to hye degree. &c. But we beeing taught out of the holy Scriptures, touching the Prouidence of God, and knowing that by it euen the least and vilest thinges that be are dispensed & accomplished, doe ascribe nothing at all either to chaunce or fortune, nay we are of this minde, that there is not so much as any chaunce or fortune: but doe attribute all thinges vniuersallye whither they be ioyous or greuous vnto God him selfe, who adorneth

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neeth whome he will with benefites, and to whom he will sendeth contrarie calamities. Of all which thinges whilest he hath the true and certaine causes in a readines, and the maner of working by them, it is enough and sufficient: neither for that we are ignorant of the causes, or of the meanes, ought any thing in them to be accounted Fortuitum, or falling out by fortune or chaunce. Whereupon we see in the Scriptures, that al thinges both good and bad which may happen, are proponned and set forth by the names of Gods blessings and cursinges, and likewise of promises and threatninges: to the intent verily we might clerely learne, that no such matter is to be ascribed vnto fortune (whither we list to call it good or euill) but all thinges to God alone, who saith expressely by his Prophet, that it is he that created good end euil, that maketh light and darkenes, &c. There might I graunt many thinges, which happen so vpon the sodaine and vnlooked for, be saide after a sort to fall out by fortune in respect of vs, and after a certaine manner of speaking (from which it must be abandoned the fond imagination teaching any such seuerall power of fortune as giueth and bestoweth all thinges vpon whome she will) but yet in respect of God, we hath (as it is

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is euident) prest and ready causes of all things that come to passe, nothing can be said to happen by Chance or Fortune. Yea and to say the very trueth, neither ought we in respect of our selues to graunt any thing vnto Fortune: sith of what things soeuer come to pas. our minde. albeit it perceiueth not the outward causes, and which we vsually terme next or nexrest, yet hath it at all times in a readines and vnderstandeth the principall working cause, to witte, the prouidence and good will of God.

For this is a most certaine rule to answer directly vnto euery question touching the causes of those thinges that are seene to come to passe, namely, that they are all wrought and accomplished by Gods good will & prouidence. Whither belonge those godly wishes and desires of the Saintes in thinges doubtful and to come: The Lords will be done: likewise in consideration of thinges down and past: So hath it pleased the Lord, his will be fulfilled. And to this effect *Augustine* de Ciuitate Dei, lib. 5 chap. 9. saith, That the causes, which are called *fortuna*, that is, casuall or working by fortune, are not altogether none at all, but such as lye hid in secret, and therefore to be ascribed to the will of God. But it shal not be amisse to illustrate and set forth the matter with some examples.

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And first touching Chance. Is it not a thing likely to be done by chance, that a Ramme being caught by the hornes stuck fast in the byers, when *Abraham* was about to offer by his sonne in sacrifice? But *Abraham* had said before, that The Lord would provide him a sacrifice, being assured by faith that the Lord would do whatsoeuer was expedient: and the same Ramme became there a figure of Christ: *Gen. 22.* Again that the Casket wherein *Moses* was put, should stote nere to the place, where *Pharaohs* daughter was gone downe to wash her selfe, appereth to haue hapned by chance: but for what great and weighty causes the Lord disposed it so to come to passe, al the holy books of Bible do most plentifully witnes: *Exod. 2.* Further we would say that it was by chance, that the iron of the Are wherewith one of the schollers of *Elizeus* hewed timber, fell into the water: but therby tooke the Prophet occasion to worke a miracle, wherby he testified his incomparable faith to God-ward, and his loue toward his neighbour: *2 Kings. 6.* To be short it may seeme to come by chance, that a Wiper creeping out of the fire caught *Paule* by the hād at *Melita*: but that thing was the cause forth with, why the barbarous people magnified the Apostle as a God: & acknowledged him to be most

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most deer vnto god. *Act. 28.* We might adioyn
yet moe examples, but that we haue to speak
in like maner touching the euents of fortune.
Wherin (I pray you) doth it seme that any
thing may moze iustly appeere to be fortuitum
or hapning by fortune, then in lottes: and yet
the Scripture doth apparantlpe teach, that
while The lotte is cast into the lap, the whole
disposition therof cometh of the Lord: *Pro. 16.*
And by this meanes, the Lord him-selfe orde-
ring the lotte, was *Saule* found out to be anoin-
ted with oyle, and so to be declared King: *1. Sam. 10.* *Jonathan* was founde to haue tasted
honye: *1. Sam. 14.* *Jonas* was bewrayed, for
that refusing the charge enioyned him of the
Lord he fled an other way: *Jonas 1.* *Mathias*
was called to the office of Apostle: *Act 1.*

May it not be thought also woorthily to fall
out by fortune, that *Rebecca* rather then any
other should giue drinck to the vnknowne ser-
uant of *Abrdham*, & afterward adde that she
would in like manner draw water for his Ca-
melles: But surely the Lord wold haue these
thinges to be for a signe, wherby the seruant
might knowe what manner of one she was
that his Masters sonne should espouse: *Gen 24*
would not all men likewise say that fortune
bare a great stroake, when *David* being thise
pursued

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pursued of *Saule* with a speare or Javelin to
 haue thrust him thzough, escaped yet safe and
 sound: But we must mark, how oft it is men-
 tioned there that the Lord was with *Dauid*,
 and that *Dauid* gaue thanks to God alone for
 his deliuerance: *1 Sam. 18. 19.* And who wold
 not iudge *Abfolons* fortune to be strange and
 meruailous, who whilest he rode vpon a mule
 in great haste, was caught by the haire of the
 head and hanged vpon the bough of an Oake,
 where also being thrust thzough by *Ioab*, he
 was smyth-with flaine outrightes of his ser-
 uants, and cast into a pitte in the wood, and
 without all honour couered with a heape
 of stones: But there in that place the Lord
 himselfe is saide to haue compassed about the
 men that lifted vp their hand against the king
 and to haue iudged for *Dauid*: *2 Sam. 18.*

Therfore to conclude, what things soeuer
 do happen so vpon the sodaine and vnlooked for
 that there appere no causes why they should
 so come to passe, when yet they might fall out
 otherwise, must be referred to the will & pro-
 uidence of God as vnto the cheefe and princi-
 pall cause. But if thou wilt still tearme them
 Fortuita or falling smyth by fortune after the
 vsuall manner and custome of speaking: yet
 must thou needs graunt this, that except the
 Lord

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Lord him selfe doo dispose and direct them, they can neuer come to passe nor attaine to any perfection.

And whilke thou dost this, thou thy selfe by rendring some cause (and the same certain) of the fact, dost now plainly subuert the nature of Fortune, sith verily there can fall out nothing by Fortune, but wherof the cause is unknown.

Wherefore whosoener iudgeth aright touching Gods prouidence, he perceineth ful wel that Fortune or chaunce is nothing. As also the Stoikes in like maner (who contended that all thinges came to passe by fate or Destiny) are reported wisely to haue taken away Fortune and Chaunce, from whose sentence or iudgement the Satyricall Poet cryeth out.

*Thy Godhead failes, if Wisdome once
take place: but Fortune we
Doo thee a Goddes make, and eke
in heauen doo harbour thee.*

Signifying that Fortune was so highly esteemed and exalted, onely and alone by the foolish perswasion of men.

Wherefore to th'end the studious may learn to obserue, how they may speake truely and without offence touching thinges happening
by

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by Fortune, (as they vse to call them) I will adde touching that matter the wordes of *S. Augustine* out of his first booke and first Chapter of *Retractions*. In my booke against the *Academiks*, saith he, it grieueth me that I haue so often vsed the name of Fortune. Albeit my meaning was not to haue any goddesse vnderstood by this name, but a chanceable euent of thinges either in respect of our bodies, or in respect of outward benefites or calamities. Where vpon also came those wordes, which no religion forbiddeth to speak: Perchance, Perhaps, Perchance, Peraduenture, By fortune. Which all notwithstanding is to be reuoked to Gods Pro- uidence. This also I concealed not there, saying: For peraduenture that which is commonly called Fortune, is ruled by some secret order: and we call chaunce in thinges nothing els, then that whose course and cause is hidden from our eyes. I saide this indeede, but yet it repenteth me, that I so named Fortune there, especially sith I perceiue men to haue taken vp a very euil custome, that where it ought to be saide, Thus would God haue it: they say, thus would Fortune haue it. *Whitherto Augustine*. Certes those aduerbs, Perhaps, Perchance, &c. doe serue more to signifie doubtfulness, the affirmation: or if not doubting, then declare they rather some thing

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be done beyond our reach, then without any certaine cause, which we must alwaies presuppose to be settled in Gods will. And *Basilius Magnus* in a certaine place saith, That Fortune and Chaunce are heathen woordes, in the signification whereof, it becometh not godly mindees to be occupied.

It remaineth that we speake of Contingence or Vaphazard. To the remouing whereof albeit there be a way after a sozte made already, whilst we haue sufficiently shewed, that there is no moze place left vnto Chaunce and fortune, where there is due regarde and consideration had of Gods Prouidence, and that it seemed not necessary to stand long here after intreating of it: yet for because we see some men labour very stoutly to iustifie and defend it, we will handle this place somewhat moze largely, then otherwise we needed to haue done.

But firste there is a certaine difference to be set downe, which seemeth vnto me meet to be obserued betwæne Contingence and fortune or chaunce. For chaunce and fortune of which we haue sufficiently spoken (if I be not deceiued) are referred chiefly to things externall, corporall, and indifferent or meane, and likewise to such as happen besides the com-

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pasſe of our expectation or deliberation: but Contingence is extended of the Diuines euen to thinges internall and ſpiritual, concerning the ſaluation or damnation of the Soule, yea and to thoſe alſo wherunto is admitted both deliberation & choice. So when one walking or beholding y^e ſtars, ſaleth into a ditch or ſink: that they ſay is Fortuitum, but when a man is inclined rather to this ſide then to that, and ſinneth or ſinneth not, they ſay that commeth to paſſe by Contingence. Wherefore they haue defined Contingence or Haphazard to be that, wherby thinges created in actions ſubiet to reaſon are oftentimes changed and altered, and doe fall either into theſe actions or into thoſe according to the choice and liberty granted of God. From which definition we may clereſly gather, that the cauſe and fountain of Contingence is the free will of man, whereby he is moued to this or that as ſeemeth good vnto him. Which libertie as it were a ſin vnto the Lord to take it away, ſo doe they it neceſſary to eſtabliſh Contingence. Albeit they are moued alſo with an other cauſe, and the ſame much greater and waightier. For in caſe it be not granted, that thinges fall out Contingently by mans free will, it will come to paſſe that ſinne ſhalbe imputed vnto God him ſelfe.

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as by whose prouidence man shall so be holden bound and fettered, that he cannot chuse but same, although otherwise he should strine to the contrarie. Hereupon straightwaies was brought into Christian scholes out of the Philosophers dark dennes, a distinction of necessitie, wherby one is saide to be Necessitie absolute or of the consequent (otherwise according to Aristotle called Determinate, according to Cicero, Simple) wherby thinges stand at such a stape, as that nothing there can be changed: as *Luke*. 24. It is necessary that all things should be fulfilled, which are written of me in the Law and the Prophets: another Necessitie of consequence, wherby many thinges are prepared to be doon, and no man iudgeth but that they ought to be done in their time, and yet notwithstanding are not alwaies brought to effect: as *Math*. 18. It is necessarye that offences should come. For so dooth mans blinde reason determine, if all thinges should come not to passe by absolute necessitie, then by some other necessitie, which namely may be changed when God shall otherwise dispoze. This necessitie therfore they call necessitie of consequence. But verily we wil shew how needlesly these thinges are concluded, and how much they detract from the dignitie of Gods Proui-

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dence,

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dence, besides that they are not grounded vpon any sure foundation, confuting every thing in the selfe-same order wherein they are of vs rehearsed, and then with some reasons and examples establishing our opiniō and assertion.

But first and sozmozt me may say this in generall: that if we did so religiously as were conuenient honoꝝ and imbrace the pꝛouidence of God, on every side turning and conuaying it selfe, and pꝛocuring and determining all things, yea the least and vilest thinges, even to the numbring and consideratiō of euery the haire of our head: and that we did mozeouer seriouſly weigh & consider, how small oꝝ none at all our libertie and freedome is, how ofte our will is letted and hindꝛed even in outward and trifling matters (soz indeed the consideration & acknowledgement of these two thinges is very requisite and necessarie, as also most pꝛofitable to illustrate and set ſmꝛth the gloꝝy of Chꝛist) and lastly if we called to mind, that it may be pꝛoued many other waies, that God is in no wise the authoꝝ of sinne, neither that it followeth euer the moze by the assertion of particuler pꝛouidence, as we haue befoze specified: Merily I would suppose, that every man might easily perceiue and see, that there were no need oꝝ necessitie at all to auouch Contingence

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gence or Vaphazard. But that shall become moze plaine and euident, if we bring forth our reasons vnto these thinges that are alreadye briefly said touching Contingence.

1 First therfoze euen by the difference that we noted betwæne casuall thinges and Contingence may after a sort our assertion be confirmed. For if not so much as casuall thinges are to be graunted, but that all such ought to be reduced to the prescription and determination of Gods prouidence: how much lesse may it be graunted, that any thing commeth to passe contingenter or by Vaphazard: It is not like that he that regardeth and disposeth the lesser matters, wil omitte or neglect the greater: by the administration wherof his praise also and gloze may be encreased. And from whose prouidence it is not lawfull to exempt so much as the fall of one poore sparrow vpon the ground: it were very iniurious to think, that of the same are not prouided and gouerned likewise the seuerall actions of euery one. But if so be that by the same are directed those actions also, which by an vsuall manner of speaking are called Casuall, and which we acknowledge to be meane or indifferent, neither seruing at all to any principall cause (so farre forth as we can conceiue) as being not (euen

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then when they are done) premeditated and forethought off by man: there is no doubt, but that by the selfesame wisdom are ruled and gouerned other actions, which are farre moze graue and waightye, and such especiall ye, as wherof depend the saluation or destruction of soules, and in which oftentimes doth moze appere and may be seene the mightye and wonderfull workmanship of God him selfe, then the power & abilitie of mans strength. Whether as by the prouidence of God fortune and chaunce, so also Contingence is subuerted and ouerthrowen.

2 Neither is there any cause why they should saye that Contingence or Vapazard doth not reach to the internall or spirituall actions, wherein is handled the matters of the soule. For seeing Contingence is occupied about such actions as are subiect to reason, doubtlesse they cannot be excluded from the order of these, by which a man incurreth the guiltines of sinne, and for which he is arraigned as guiltie before the tribunall seat of God: inasmuch as these actions are done and accomplished by reason, which doth alwaies also egge and inuite rather vnto euill then vnto good. And these foresaide actions are truely internall and spirituall (for why they proceed out of the
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the closet of the hart) and doe defile the soule before God, Christe expresselye witnessing it *Math. 15.* wherfoze the power and dominion of Contingence stretcheth it selfe even to spirituall actions also. For further prooue wherof it appereth, that by reason of these saide actions especially sinfull and vitions, I say, and sauouring of damnation, because they are done besides the will of God, neither may God be esteemed the autho: of sinne, the occasion was taken of graunting & anouthing of Contingence. It remaineth therfoze that Contingence reacheth to spirituall thinges, and cheefly to the actions of sinne. But from hence god God, what horrible inconueniences doe immediately followe: If we sinne by contingence: it appereth that we doe euill also by cōtingence and this doubtlesse so much the more, by how much the lesse it is in our power, and falltth more seldome that we doe well then ill. But if this be graunted, then shall also the eternall saluation o: damnation of man be reduced to Contingence, and then when any is saved o: damned euerlastinglye, it must forsooth be ascribed to Contingence. Which if it be true, then shall predestination also be in danger, neither shall any thing be accomplished for and by it, but so farre forth as men themselves

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Shall contingentl^ye o^r at all aduentures direct
their owne actions. And there is in very deap
between Predestination and prouidence great
affinitie and resemblance, so that the one doth
as it were suppo^rte and fo^rtifie the other.
Fo^r why, Predestination beareth it self as re-
specting the endes o^r effectes: and prouidence
as intentiuely bent to the causes o^r meanes.
Wherupon it commeth to passe, that as he
that taketh away the meanes o^r causes, the
same taketh also the effectes: so he that detract-
eth from the dignitie of Prouidence, must al-
so of necessitie impare the authoritie of prede-
stination. But rather then we should thus ad-
mit Gods Predestination o^r prouidence to be
any whit lessened o^r diminished, let vs stoppe
both our eares, and as fo^r that Contingence
o^r Vapazard, so foolishlye inuented by mans
reason: let vs neuer suffer it to come in pre-
sence, but with all possible diligence and com-
mon inforcement let vs endeuor v^tterly to ba-
nish, abandon and abolish it fo^r euer.

3 Ho^ueouer that foundation, where-upon
the whole poize of Contingence lyeth, name-
ly free will, every man may easily perceiue and
see how weake & vnstable it is. If this should
alga^tes be true, that the will o^r choice of man
were in all respectes so free, as y^e Philosophers
haue

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haue defined, and mans reason laboureth to
perswade euen vnto this daye: then indeede
were Contingence or Hapazard to be graun-
ted, yea and it would seme to appeere, that
man should doe or not doe euery thing after his
owne likement, God in the meane time kee-
ping him selfe close, and intermedling as little
as is possible with our affaires, but seeing it is
plaine and euident (for we haue befoze intrea-
ted of this matter) that we can in no kinde of
actions (whither we respect externall & corpo-
rall, or internall & spirituall, or meane & indy-
dle actions) begin or proceed, further forth then
the Lord him selfe ordeineth, disposeth, and lea-
deth: our owne conscience compelleth vs to
confesse, that there is nothing done of vs con-
tingently, but that all our workes and enter-
prizes, haue their beginninges, proceedinges
and endings, after the Lordes ordinance and
good pleasure, which can by no meanes be by
vs changed or interted. **W**ile verilye for our
partes consult and take counsell, we seeke for
help and aide, we are carefull for all the waies
and meanes, wherby we may bring that to an
ende, which we haue once conceived in our
mind, and at length also we haue all thinges
at hand which we long desired: yet we see of-
tentimes, euen when all things are in the best
wise

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wise provided, that our desires are disappointed, and that it is upon the sodaine most unhappily broken off, which we supposed to be most happily begun and set forward. And why is this? Doubtlesse for no other cause, then for that the Lord ordained only such beginnings to be, but determined to let and hinder the proceedings. So in the Prophets are declared the counsels of the Jewes touching the calling of the Egyptians & other foraine powers against the Babilonicall enemy at hand, as also in the booke of the Gospell their deuises are opened touching the way and meane how to obscure and darken the noble fame of Christs resurrection, and to suppress his whole doctrine: but those desires of theirs attained not their desired endes, because forsooth the Lord, when he ordained them to devise such fetches, did with all ordeine them to be disappointed of their expectation, and all things to fall out cleane contrary. And in these cases nothing in the meane time without most iust and profitable causes. For mens attempts and endeours being made frustrate and void, do cause Gods power to appeere notable and famous, they stirre vp and confirme the Godly (who are delighted moze with spirituall things then carnall) to reuerence and imbrace the wil of God: they

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they inforce commonly the wicked to acknowledge Gods power, godnes, righteousness, and to submit their proud and lofty neckes: finally innumerable other good things doe flowe and proceed out of these and such like ordinaunces of God. We haue produced and alleadged many examples, according to the diuers kindes of actions agreeable to this present purpose, where we entreated before as touching the libertie of mans will. Wherefore hereby it is concluded, that there can no other Contingence be found out in actions subiect to reason, then is the libertie of man in the selfesame actions: and seeing this is very small and almost none at all, it followeth that such also must contingence be esteemed: yea and so little regarde is to be had of it, even when to the doing of thinges our will either inclineth or inclineth not, that the Lordes prouidence is alwaies at libertie and remaineth ever firme and stable, as by the which it is as well prouided as foreseene, that we shall apply our will (when time is) or not apply it.

4 Further where they suppose that Contingence is most wisely and necessarily established, least if it be graunted that all thinges come simple to passe by the diuine ordinance, we should be enforced to graunt, that y^e cause
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of sinne resteth in God, and that he is the author of sinne: we haue before clearly shewed and that not by one reason alone, that the cause of sinne can in no wise be imputed vnto God, but to men onely them selues that are the committers of it: and yet neuerthelesse that this trueth standeth fast and sure, That God woorketh all in all by his Providence. For why vnto one and the selfsame thing woorketh together God & man, yea and the deuill also: but because he doth it by an other meane and to an other end and purpose then these, it cometh to passe that the blame and guilt of sin reboundeth vpon their head, and his godnes and iustice appere even most clere and excellent. And in the meane time Gods providence ordaining, and euery where putting to his helping hand, the whole matter is brought to passe and accomplished. It were to no purpose to repeate those thinges which we haue already more at large declared. Euery man may easily perceiue, that it is in vaine and superfluous to bring forth Contingence, where the inconuenience that is objected may so many wayes be auoided.

5 Now touching that distinction, whereby one necessitie is saide to be absolute or of the consequent, and an other of the consequence, that

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that we may adde somewhat: Certes besides that it ought euen for this cause woorthily to be suspected, and abandoned, for that it cometh out of the scholes of the Philosophers and Sophisters, we will also by some reasons make it plaine and manifest, that it is in like manner deuised beside the purpose, & serueth nothing at all vnto this present cause.

1 First let vs see from whence it came. It spring from a false suppositiō. namely that the libertie of mans will is so great, that he can therby effeete something besides the ordinance of God: to witte sinne, or at leastwise do some such thing, as is subiect to the rule of reason. But we haue sufficiently proued, that this is in no wise to be graunted: wherfoze also this distinction is vaine and frivolous.

2 This distinction doth not so proue any thing to be done by necessitie of consequence, but that it leaue it still whole, that all things are accomplished by Gods prouidence through necessitie absolute. Which poynte also we will easily proue. For the thinges which are said to be done by necessitie of consequence, are so farworth iudged and in such wise to be accomplished by man, as also the causes are seene to be in a readines: as, either the expresse word of God, after which sozte necessarily by necessitie

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stie of consequence the dead shall rise againe, whilest it must inchangeably be fulfilled, what soeuer is established by the voice of God: or second causes going before, in which respect, whilest some are in the Church very proud, desirous of new things, and willingly disagreeing from the opinions of other men, it cannot be but that heresies and offences should arise: these things I say are said to be contingent and necessary by necessitie of consequence, because forsooth they are not necessary by nature, but only by reason of these causes propounded.

But whereas man, through his imbecilitie and weaknes, cannot discern these things to come to passe otherwise, which are not in his iudgement necessary by nature, but so far forth as he seeth such manifest causes going before: what doth this auaille, I pray you, to proue, that all things are not alwaies extant with God, and that by an absolute necessitie all things are not wrought & accomplished by and through him: Undoubtedly of those things which must once come to passe, there is nothing done, but so far forth as God him selfe hath ordained it to be: & whatsoeuer he hath ordained, that must of necessitie be accomplished. Whereby it cometh to passe, that in God, who is aboue all second causes, and aboue all
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time, there can no newe or sodaine cause, no change or alteration of will be enquired or sought after : but onely and alone the euerlasting decree ought to be considered, according to the which that must be immutably and necessarily be fulfilled, which (that it should once be fulfilled) was ordeined euen befoze the creation of the world. Neither makes it any matter in the meane season, whither God hath opened vnto man, his will, or decree, by expresse word or by exhibiting of second causes, or no : onely his determination must of necessitie be accomplished. For whereas God doth sometimes either by his expresse word, or by apparance of second causes denounce any thing to be done : he doth not that doubtles because it was not determined befoze with him self how and after what sorte it should be done, much lesse that without these causes going befoze it could be done : but because it was deried from euerlasting that the same should in any wise be done, & then befoze it was brought to passe that it should also be declared by such a mean. Therfoze that which among men and in the opinion of men, and by a certaine vsuall maner of speaking, cometh to passe contingently and onely by necessitie of consequence, with God vndoubtedly it cometh to passe necessarily and
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by necessitie absolute. For if those things that happen, were duly considered in them selues as they are done of God; then verily is there nothing Contingent, nothing falling out by necessitie of consequence: but onely Gods eternall Decree is of force, and absolute & vnhangeable necessitie.

Seeing those things are said to be contingent, which are not necessarie by nature: it is to be determined, that there is nothing of vs to be esteemed contingent and not necessary by nature, but that the same is with God necessary by nature, if so be he hath once decreed, that it shall be accomplished. For why? Gods Decree is in stead of nature, nay it is more then nature, and is able to do more then nature.

Wherefore the resurrection of the dead, although in respect of vs it be not necessarye by nature, yea rather seemeth more trulye to be impossible: yet with God it is simply and absolutely necessary, and that because it was decreed of him from euerlasting. Neither can it be but y the same shal be fulfilled, yea & it shall be more certainly and effectuallye be fulfilled, the the things which amongst vs are thought necessary by nature to be fulfilled: especiallye seeing experience dooth teach, that the order and course of nature is ofte times letted, as
namely

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namelye when miracles are apparantlye wrought) as in the standing still of the sunne, in the time of *Iosua*: and the going back thereof, in the time of *Ezechias*) but that the ordinance or decree of God should be prevented or interrupted, no mans minde dareth once to conceiue.

4 It is necessary by absolute necessitie, that God should be most chæfely god, and that for God being good all good things should proceed from him: neither is it possible that any other thing then good should come from him. And necessarye it is by the like necessitie, that all those thinges should be accomplished which are of him decreed, whither the same be accounted in our iudgement Contingents, or impossible by nature, or (I will adde also) euill: but of all the thinges that he him selfe hath decreede, there cannot possibly be any, but that out of it should be deriued some commodities either to the profit and vtilitie of men, or to the illustration and setting forth of his owne glozve. Wherefore whatsoeuer thinges of this sort come to passe, for so much as they are good, and not wrought but of God, we must needs vnderstand them to be don by absolute necessitie. Thus much I thinke sufficient for this present.

5 But if some men moze vehementlye pro-
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uoked to defend and maintaine as well Contingence as also the necessitie of Consequence, Shall oppose vnto vs the places of Scripture, wherby it seemeth to be proued, that y^e thing is not alwaies fulfilled which God hath decreed: as for example where God is brought in moued with repentance, y^e he had made man, *Genes. 6.* that he had made *Saule King*, *1. Sam. 15* where his decrees are declared to be abrogate or chaunged: as when after death most certainly denounced to King *Ezechias*. his life was againe prolonged to moe yeeres, *Esa. 38.* likewise when to the *Ninuites* was fo:tolde most certaine destruction to followe within fewe dayes, and yet againe they were spared, *Jon. 2.* where if I say by producing of these and such like places they shall goe about to wzing from vs, that some thinges come to passe contingently or by Vap hazard, and that al things fall out by absolute necessitie: we will answer them briefly as followeth.

1 First to those places touching repentance, we say y^e there are there mere human affections, such as in the scriptures are euery where attributed vnto God, necessarye for the cause of teaching, to witte that our vnderstanding might be brought from y^e obseruation of mens matters so much the moze conueniently to the knowledge

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knowledge also of Gods will, And it is signified by those phrases, that God will haue some thinges changed towards vs : not that he wil any way alter or transpose his owne purpose or will, but that he will most simply prosecute and pursue that which was decreed from eueralasting to be diuerslye accomplished : yea so decreed I say, that first it should so come to passe, and afterward that it should fall out otherwise, euen altogether as we see the whole matter dispatched and brought to an ende. There is no other thing therfore ment, then that as the worke was decreed diuerslye to be done, so is it diuerslye fulfilled : and so not Continently, but in trueth necessarilye and euen by absolute necessity are al these things wrought according to the immutable sentence of Gods decree.

2 In like case may it be saide of the abrogation or alteration of the decrees touching *Ezechias* and the *Ninuites*. For it was decreade from eueralasting, that this cause should be handled with such beginninges, and also that destruction should first be denounced vnto the, then that it would come to passe y they should acknowledge their sinnes, earnestly imploze the mercy of God, obtain pardon and forgiveness, and so by this meanes should not perishe.

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Whetherfoz in this turning away of their destruction, there was not made any change or alteration of Gods ordinance, but simplye & execution of his eternall decre: neither did any thing there come to passe Contingently or by Hazard, but by Absolute necessitie was & whole busines brought to an ende. As God in these causes provided such beginnings, so provided he the proceedinges and successe which we see did follow. And nothing verilye without most great and iust causes. For by that denuntiation of destruction beholde how many & great good things followed. As wel *Ezechias* as the *Ninivites* were brought to the acknowledgement and confession of their sinnes: then they became carefull to repent: the faith and feare of God were forthwith kindled and stirred up in them: they were throughe moued to call vpon God for mercy, to the amendement of their liues afterward: and (to be short) their whole posteritie hath a notable example of repentance in them propounded and set forth. Againe by their miruailous preservation, the power and goodnes of God is exceedingly declared, and a document given to all ages for the confirmation of faith and hope. And sith there was nothing done there in vain, nothing without most graue and waighty causes and
great

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great profit and vtilitie, it is plaine and euident that it cannot be said, that any thing came to passe by Contingence and (as a man would say by Gods working at or dissembling the matter.

In like maner God prouided the treason or betraying of *Iudas* and the deniall of *Peter*, but he prouided withall the successe of either of the to be farre vnlike: namelye that it should so fall out that the one being led with repentance should craue pardon and obtaine it, the other that he should fall into desperation and perish. And in either of them, sith they seemed alike to be grieved and to be touched with repentance, if necessitie of consequence were to be regarded, it might be thought that they both obtained pardon: and euery man might saye, seeing the outward sorrowing of *Iudas*, that he also of necessity became partaker of forgiveness. But that was not so, in as much as it was otherwise determined of God him selfe from euerlasting. And of so great a difference God had most iust causes and considerations, so as he can by no meanes be accused either of negligence or partiality. And so of al other things which albeit they may seeme in our opinion to come to passe most chesely by Contingence or Vap hazard, yet must it be determined, that

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they fall out in very deed by the appointment and disposition of Gods providence.

Wherefore that we may once dispatch and make an end of this disputation touching contingence, it shalbe much better for vs to speak simply and plainly of those things that happen (sith it is certaine that nothing comes to passe without the will and dispensation of God) vsing those formes of speaking, which we see to be vsuall in the holy Scripture, and so sincerely to yelde ouer to the diuine providence the honoꝝ and dignitie which it deserueth, then by strange subtilties of wordes, and vaine and superfluous distinctions, to minister occasion of bꝛauling, and also of doubting of the power and godnes of God. And seeing the Scripture doth euery where and very apparantly testifie and declare, that the Lord moueth, inclineth exerciteth the hartes of men, hath them in his hand, directeth, and draweth them: also that the Lord caused them to fall, blinded, hardened, deliuered into a reprobate sence: againe that the Lord worketh in men and by men that which seemeth right in his own eyes, and that the will of the Lord is euery where done and accomplished: likewise that the goinges, willes, and actions of men are ruled and governed by the Lord: further that the Lord gi-
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ueth power, strength, and might, either to doe
or not to doe any thing: Item that the Lord
punisheth the wicked, and approueth the good,
ly, by sending of sundry and variable successes
vnto them: to be shor't that he doeth all things
after his own goodnes, power, and iustice, and
willeth and disposeth to be done whatsoeuer is
done, neither that any thing is so vile and base
or (in our iudgement also) hurtfull, out of the
which he draweth not some good: moreover
that we see all these thinges, and the Holy
Ghost to speake simply in this wise. It cannot
be but that offences shall come: *Math. 18.* It
cannot be auoided but that offences will come:
Luke. 17. Again The Scriptures must needs
be fulfilled, &c. *Luke. 24.* And: There must be
heresies among you: *1. Corinth. 11.* Last of all
sith in other places these and such like proper
phrases of speache are oftentimes met withall,
and all of them most apt to celebrate and set
forth the glory of God with such reuerence and
deuotion as is most fit and requisite: Let vs
learne and inure our selues to vse such and the
same also, and as ofte as we speake of Gods
prouidence, let vs sprinkle them in our spee-
ches and communication vtterly abandoning
all monstrous words and vaine and friuelous
distinctions. Certainly as for the holiest and
learnedst

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learnedst of the fathers we see them to haue
 bene contented with a very simple and plain
 manner of speaking. *Chrisostome* expounding
 that of *Iohn. 18.* It is necessarye that offences
 should come: It is necessary, saith he, that they
 should come: but to perish, it is not altogether
 necessary. A little after he addeth: He foretel-
 leth for a certaintie that offences should come,
 and so much is expressed in other woordes of
Luke. 17. It cannot be auoided but that offences
 will come. Albeit that in y place some thinges
 are spoken, which may seeme doubtfull vnto
 him that is not very attentiu, as that it is
 not signified by the Lords wordes, that the
 life of men is subiect to the necessitie of thinges
 (perhaps he understandeth by the word Ne-
 cessitie the Philosophers fate or destiny, and
 then speaketh he most truely) yet are many
 thinges propounded also most worthy the rea-
 ding, and to this present purpose very fitte and
 conuenient. But in the mean time he maketh
 no mention at al of contingence or of necessity
 of cōsequence. *Augustine* de libero arbitrio lib. 5.
 cap. 3. doubteth not to affirme, that all things
 come to passe by necessitie, which come to passe
 in the creatures of God: and that because God
 hath already determined it, according as may
 stand best with the order of that vniuersitie of
 thinges

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things which he hath created. For he doth not alter his wil and purpose in the gouernment and administration of things. And in the meane season he doth most clærly teach in that place how it is to be vnderstood, that we sinne voluntarily by our own will. Againe De ciuitate Dei lib. 5. cap. 10. he saith, That there is a certaine necessitie called ours, which is not in our power, but although we be vnwilling yet it worketh what it may, as is the necessity of death: and a certaine necessitie wherby we say that it is necessary, that a thing should so be or should so come to passe, as it is necessary that God should euer liue and foreknow all things. So saith *Augustin*. Neither doe I yet see any thing that may make to the establishing of Contingence or Necessitie of Consequence: albeit I am not ignorant, that the same destination is attributed vnto *Augustine* him selfe quest. 23. Can. 4. *Nabuchodonosor*. I feare least it be taken out of some counterfet work foisted in amongst his. So lesse soberlye in handling of such places haue the residue of the fathers spoken, of whome the greatest number made conscience in borrowing so much as one word out of the Philosophers schole, that might cast any suspicion or scruple of error into godly mindes. Neither is there extant in any (whose authoritie

ritie at least is of any accompte in the Senate of the Doctors of the Church, especiallye the more ancient) either the word Contingence, or that distinction wherof we haue spoken. Which thing seing it is so, we vnderstand y^e is our partes and duties studiously to auoide the perilous innouations of wordes, and vaine distinctions: and on the other side to vse plaine and vsuall phzases, such especiallye as are contained in the holy Scriptures. And the doubtlesse will all men iudge, that we thinke reuerently of diuine matters, when they shall perceine vs to speake of the same properlye and without offence.

But to the intent we may aswel yet more evidently confirme, that all thinges come to passe by the necessitie of Gods prouidence, and nothing contingently or by haphazard: as also that we may set befoze all the godlye as it were in a table, how and after what sort it be- houeth them to vse the places that entreat of Gods prouidence, and the phzases wherein the same matter is handled, in reading of the holy Scriptures: We suppose it will be athing worth our labour, if we propound certaine historிக்கal examples out of the Scriptures, and consider in what points the force of Gods prouidence doth vtter & declare it self. Now ther

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is extant great plenty of such examples, but it shall be sufficient for vs to haue produced only twaine: the one shalbe of *Ioseph* sold of his brethren: the other of *Absolon* rebelling against *Dauid* his father.

Intending therfore to speake of *Ioseph*, we are to consider first and foremost what y Lord by his Prouidence determined in especiall ye to make knowne in him. We had determined to preferre him at the length to the gouernment of the land of Egypt, to the end he might there become a helpe and comfort to his ffather *Iacob* and to al his brethren, in prouiding things necessary to liue withall in the time of an vniuersall famin: and y by the same occasion also the posteritie of *Abraham* might passe into Egypt, there to serue in bondage and thraldom, as God had foretolde long before vnto *Abraham* it should come to passe *Genes. 15*. But now beholde (I pray you) by what meanes God determined to bring this thing to passe. First it is written *Genes. 37*. that *Ioseph* was beloued of his ffather aboue all his brethren, and that he was clad also in a partiocoloured coat, and for that cause became very much hated of his brethren. Beholde a certaine beginning or entry into the matter, though appering onely a farre off, from the which afterward it came to the

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the platfome touching the selling of *Ioseph*: and which (although it were euill) God intended to ble to the procuring of much good. *Where* upon *Ioseph* hath dreames in apperance and outward shew very absurd, but in trueth most certaine prognostications of great and most weighty matters to be accomplished in him.

As for Dreames they might same (if any other thing at all) to fall out especially by contingence or haphazard, as *h* which are accounted for light and vaine thinges: and yet that they were sent of God, the very sequell of the matter did declare. Doubtles it is meruailous to beholde the maiestie of God occupied euen about the disposing of mens dreames. And for the same cause were these dreames very much suspected of his brethren, for they priuily feared, that it might one day so come to passe as the dreames did portend, their conscience no doubt telling them somewhat touching the power of Gods prouidence, wonderfullye ruling and ouer-mastering mens matters. And concerning his Father it is expressely added, that he kept this saying diligently in his hart. By which testimony the holy ghost declareth, that he was a most reuerend regarder of the diuine prouidence, and that he considered right well, that those dreames were not sent at all aduentures

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tares, but by the will of God, yea & for great and weightye causes. But how came *Ioseph* into Egypt? God put into the minde of *Iacob*, to send *Ioseph* into the fieldes to seeke vp his brethren. Neither in deede was this very thinge done with-out the determinate purpose of God. *Ioseph* being departed stayeth in y^e fieldes, wher he findeth one that setteth him the right waye, and besides telleth him tydings of his brethren, where they are. As yet there was nothing done without cause. For if this man had not been met withall, perhaps *Ioseph* being wery would haue returned home, and of y^e business should not haue gon forward. Wherefore albeit it may appere that these thinges came to passe by contingence or haphazard, yet is it plaine that nothing was don without the dispensation of God And loe, *Ioseph* was no soner come into the sight of his brethren, but that they all eftsomes conspire his death. They conceiue in deede a detestable fact, but yet such as the Lord will immediatly alter, & out of which shall come a singuler good. Onely *Ruben* dooth constantly intreat, perswading rather to haue him cast into a pitte, & hoping by that meanes that he might priuily conuaye *Ioseph* safe vnto his father. And this thing was procured by the Lord, least their minds being as yet on fire they

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they should sozthwith defile their hands with their bzethers blood. Albeit neither did this counsell of *Ruben* pzeuaille accozding to his desire. It was in deēd god & godly of it selfe, as that which would haue been very ioyful to the Father, holosome to *Ioseph* and no whit discommodious to the bzetheren, and therfore in our iudgement God ought of right to haue holpen sozward the attempts of *Ruben*. But in vaine is mans counsaile set against Gods. As the counsell of them that would haue had him destroyed could not take the effect, so was it not expedient that his counsaile that coneted to save him should goe soz payment: seeing they bothe were indifferently against the immutable decreē of the Lord touching the promoting of *Ioseph* in Egypt, which was altogether necessary to be perfourmed. *Ioseph* therfore is cast in to a pitte, as who should say to be killed with hunger. In the meane time that outragiousnes of minde and boyling wzath in the bzetheren is soz great god by little and little saked and wahren colde. What then? Harry besides all expectation comes me *Isrealitish* marchants that way. But think not that any thing came to passe by haphazard. God himselfe had very fitly bzawen them to that place. For why, by this occasion the bzetheren changing their sentence

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tence, consult about the selling of *Ioseph* to the *Ismaelites*. And heer a man may see the principall meane, which the Lord had preordayned for the conuaying of *Ioseph* into Egypt. Wherefore this last deuise of the brethren the Lord would haue to take place: and *Ioseph* now is solde vnto the *Ismaelites*, he accompanieth them directly into Egypt where he must one day bear the chiefe sway. By the way I admonish, that here was propounded and set forth a wonderfull token and mysterie of Gods dispensation towards the first springing Church, in that *Ioseph* was rather solde for the price of money, then by any other meanes (which might easily also haue bene deuiled) cast out. For in this behalfe there ought to appere in *Ioseph* a type and figure of Christe to be solde afterwarde in like manner. *Ioseph* being solde, his party-coloured coate dipped in blood is sent vnto his Father, least y^e olde man should come to the knowledge of the sinne committed, and might think the Childe to be tome in peces by some wilde beast. But beholde why God would haue *Ioseph* to be adorned of his Father with such a garment, verily to this end that by this signe he might be induced to beloue, & be thoroughly perswaded of the matter. And the Lord would therfore haue this conceit to be inueted by the brethren

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bretheren, and the Father to be perswaded;
 least the old man should be carefull after ward
 to make any further enquirie for his Sonne:
 who vndoubtedly would haue laboured euen
 to his exceeding coste and charges, to haue set-
 ched him back out of the middest of Egypt, if he
 had knowne him to be there. So farre for the
 was that necessarye to be fulfilled, which the
 Lord had already determined touching the go-
 ing of *Ioseph* into Egypt. That which followeth
Gen. 38. belongeth not to *Ioseph*, neuerthelesse
 it contayneth notable instructions concerning
 Gods prouidence. For that we may adde this
 also as it were by the way, it is declared how
Thamar taking the matter greuously, for that
 after the death of her husband *Er* the sonne of
Juda, his other sonne *Sela* being promised vn-
 to her, was yet giuen vnto another, she in
 trim apparell, and fashioned in a maner after
 the guise of Harlots, went into a common
 way: and that *Juda* came hastily thither the
 selfe same way, and companied with her, who
 he suspected to be a Harlot, being in very deed
 his daughter in lawe, and gat her with childe,
 giuing her for a pledge or token (inasmuch as
 he had no reward in a readines to bestowe on
 her) his ring, Staffe, and cloake. Now in this
 histoꝝy many thinges, nay euery thing might
same

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seeme to fall out Contingently or by Vap-
 zard, (for what might be saide to be moze Con-
 tingent, then to be clad in this or that gar-
 ment, to goe to this or that place, to resort to
 a woman with a will to be nought with her,
 to giue a pledge or not to giue it?) if we were
 not taught by the Euangelists (*Math. 1. Luke.*
3.) very cleerely and manifestlye, that euery
 thing was so disposed and ordered by the Lord
 him selfe, vnto whom it seemed good by such a
 meane to amplifie the stock and familie out of
 which Christ was to be borne, and to vse the
 lewde and naughtye will of *Iuda* vnto good.
 Furthermoze *Ioseph* being entred into *Egipt*,
 what doth he? Is he raised by and by to the
 administratiō of the common wealth, or doth
 he hastily thrust forward him self to intermed-
 dle with hard & difficulte affaires? No verily.
 The Lord would haue as yet many things to
 goe betwene. *Ioseph* was already before once
 solde, *Genes. 39.* and not to any of the common
 sort, but to *Potiphar* the cheefe steward of *Pha-*
raoh, who beholding him to be adozned with
 excellent gistes of body and minde, betaketh
 vnto him the charge of his whole house and of
 all his goods. And thus would the Lord, (as it
 were) prepare *Ioseph* after a sort to vndertake
 great and waighety matters after ward, and to

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live in such a place, as where occasion might
 be giue both to heare and learn many things.
 Which that it might the more conveniently
 be accomplished, the Lord made such signes to
 appere in *Ioseph*, as wherby al men might vn-
 derstand, that euery of his actions were espe-
 cially gouerned by the heauenlye prouidence.
 Whereupon the Scripture there in that place,
 prouoking vs vndoubtedly to the considerati-
 on of God prouidence euery where working,
 doth sometimes repeate, that God was with
Ioseph, and made all thinges to prosper that he
 tooke in hand. Now come we to those meanes
 which it pleased God to vse, in aduancing *Ie-*
seph to so excellent a dignitie. Doubtlesse to
 mans reason they might be thought very fond
 and foolish, yea and some of them such, as by
 which we might gather, that *Ioseph* was ra-
 ther forsaken of God then holpen. For why: he
 must fetch his beginning here from the foule
 and filthy prison, and must tread his first step
 to glory through the path of extreame shame
 and ignominy. *Pharaohs* wife burning in lust,
 and feigning lies touching force to be offered
 vnto her by *Ioseph*, was the cause, that he be-
 ing guiltlesse and innocent was cast into pri-
 son. But certainly Gods prouidence sleapt not
 in the meane time, as busilye disposing, how
out

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out of the sinne of a shamelesse harlot, and the
 misteries of his seruant wrongfully vered he
 might raise and procure many good things.
 First he brought to passe, that *Ioseph* was ve-
 ry well liked & accepted of the ruler of the pri-
 son, and in that respect was so much the better
 prouided for. For thus saith the Scripture ex-
 pressely: But God was with *Ioseph*, and gaue him
 fauour in the sight of the maister of the prison.
 Whereupon the ruler committed also vnto *Ioseph*
 the charge of all the prisoners. And so *Ioseph* e-
 uen in bonds, yet by Lord so ordaining. beareth
 rule: so trulpe might it be saide, that he all the
 time he was in Egypt, did nothing els then erer
 rule a perpetuall kinde of gouernement, & play
 the part continually of a maister, & was solde
 to be a bond seruant. He had bozne authoritie
 in *Potiphars* house, he beareth authoritie in the
 prison, and every where happily: it remaineth
 only that he be preferred ouer all Egypt, to go-
 uerne it with like felicitie. And to this dignity
 he was aduanced by this occasion. There
 were in the prison at that time *Pharaohs* But-
 ler and Baker, as it is written *Genes. 40.*
 These men, as it happeneth sometimes, had
 Dreames, wherewith they were not a little
 troubled. But note heer againe, that dreames
 are induced of God and that not without a

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cause.

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cause. *Ioseph* as he was taught of God (for so he saith there: Are not interpretations of Gods?) declareth the signification of the dreames, saying, y they are most certaine sozedemonstrations touching the issue of either of their cause. After thre daies the thing it selfe approued the trueth of the interpretation, whilst the one (as *Ioseph* had sozetolde) was hanged vpon a tree, and the other restozed to his former office. But when two yeeres were expired after that, King *Pharaoh* him selfe (*Genes. 41.*) is vehemently troubled with strange and vnaccustomed dreames, neither desired he any thing so much, as to hear of some one, that could tell him the meaning of them, and what they betokened. Soe heere the counsell and purpose of God. When as there could none be found among all the wise men of Egypt (of which sort there were the many) that could say any thing (in effect) to the matter, the Butler, (not doubtles contingetly or at al aduentures, but God plucking him (as it were) by the care.) remembreth *Ioseph*, and sheweth *Pharaoh* of his dexteritie in expounding and interpreting of dreames. *Pharaoh* sozthwith commaundeth him to be bzought out of prison vnto his presence, without any delaye telleth him his dreames, and requireth him to declare the meaning

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meaning of them. *There Ioseph* referring all thinges (as was meet and conuenient) to the prouidence of God: Not I, saith he, but God shall giue answer for the welfare of *Pharaoh*. And a little after: Both *Pharaohs* dreames are one, and God hath showed vnto *Pharaoh* what he is about to doo. Again: And this is the thing which I haue said vnto *Pharaoh*, that God hath shewed vnto *Pharaoh* what he purposeth to do. And againe: And because the dream was doubled vpon *Pharaoh* the second time, beholde the thing is established by God, and God will make haste to pertourne it. Then the which what could be spoken moze grauely: or how could it be moze clarely exprest, that all thinges that are, come to passe by Gods ordinance, and that they must of necessitie be accomplished, which he hath once determined: God forbid therfore, y either in *Pharaohs* dreames, or in *Iosephs* deliuerance, or in any other actiōs whatsoeuer, we should giue any place to Confin-
tingence. Certes *Pharaoh* him selfe and al his Courtours acknowledged Gods prouidence so effectually working in *Ioseph*, and extolled the same with praise. For hauing heard the most wholesome counsell and aduice of *Ioseph*, touching the gathering vp of the fruites into the barnes during all the space of the seauen
Lij. fruitfull

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fruitfull yeeres, *Pharaoh* said vnto his seruants: Can there be found any such man as this, in whom is the spirit of God? **Then said he to *Ioseph***: Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is no man of wisdom and vnderstanding like vnto thee. Thou shalt therefore be ouer mine house, and at thy commaundement shall all my people be armed, and only in the Kings throne will I be aboute thee, &c. Then *Pharaoh* called *Iosephs* name *Zaphnath Paaneah*, as a man would say, the searcher and expounder of hidden mysteries. **Beholde how that now is perfourmed in *Ioseph*, which God had alreadye determined: and how that whatsoeuer things are hitherto done, were procured by the singular prouidence of God, and especiallye directed to this point, namely that *Ioseph* might be advanced to the gouernemēt of the whole kingdome of Egypt.** What man pondering al these thinges in his minde, would not maruell at the prouidence of God, so intentiuelye watching and carefull euen in the least thinges for mans saluation: But we make not an ende here as yet: there remain some thinges in the hystoꝛye of *Ioseph* most woꝛthy to be obserued. Whylest the famin raged and ranged through out the whole worlde, *Iacob* hearing *Genes. 42.* that there was Cozne to be solde in Egypt. sendeth

octh

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deſt ten of his Sonnes thither to buye ſode:
 who when they were come thither, they woꝝ
 ſhipped the Lord of y^e land, ſuſpecting nothing
 leſſe, then that he had been their brother *Ioſeph*.
 Where it is ſtraight waies added: And *Ioſeph*
 knew them to be his bretheren, but they knewe
 not him. And *Ioſeph* remembred the dreames
 which he dreamed of them. *ſcholde* *Ioſeph* a
 diligent marker and obſeruer of Gods proui-
 dence weigheth with him ſelfe, that it ſell not
 out by Chaunce oꝝ Haphazard, that he being
 a childe long befoze had dreamed, that he
 ſhould one day be woꝝſhipped of his bretheren
 foꝝ he ſerth now the ſelfeſame thing to be ful-
 fill: d indeed. *Pea* and they alſo, when it was
 laide vnto their charges, that they were cra-
 ty ſpies, and foꝝ that cauſe were drawen into
 priſon, they conſtrued that they were not
 brought into danger raſhly and without cauſe
 but by the iuſt iudgement and ordinaunce of
 God, foꝝ thus it is in the text: And one of the
 ſaid vnto another, verily we haue ſinned againſt
 our brother, in that we ſawe the anguiſh of his
 ſoule, when he beſought vs, and we would not
 heare him: and therfore is this trouble come v-
 p on vs. foꝝ ſo did extreame neceſſitie wꝝing
 this confeſſion from them touching the care
 and gouernement of God in and about mens
L iij.
matters.

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matters. Albeit it appereth that therfore also was this confessiō made and brought to light, to wit, that therby *Ioseph* him selfe might farre more vehemently be moued, & that from thence forth he might conceiue such deuices in his minde, as wherby he might drawe as well all his bretheren, as his father also into Egypt. For why? hitherto tendeth all that now doth followe. For it behoued of necessitie to be fulfilled, not onely whatsoeuer was determined touching the aduancing of *Ioseph* to the highest top of dignitie, but also in like maner whatsoever God had once decreed from euerlasting touching the bondage and seruitude of the *Israelitish* people in Egypt by the space of fouer hundred yeres together, whereof also he had now long before (*Genes. 15.*) certified his seruānt *Abraham*. To this thing therfore will the Lord from henceforth direct the drifts and counsels of *Ioseph*: neither yet by any humane consultations (though euen of the holy fathers themselues, which had heard no doubt of it by *Abraham*, and if we beholde the iudgement of mans reason, they ought worthily to haue fled from it) might that eternall decreē be lettēd or hindered. Let vs see therfore what means the Lord bled to the accomplishment herof. *Ioseph* dismisseth not the men whome he called spies,

spies, but vpon this conditiō, that one of them
 should remaine in bondes, and the residue
 make promise, that they would bring with
 them their yongest brother also, of whom they
 had made mention. Furthermore he provided
 that y^e monye which euery one brought, should
 priuily be conueighed into euery of their sacks.
 There is nothing don here Contingentlye or
 by Haphazard. For by these meanes it beho-
 ued them to be constrained to keepe touch, to
 the end they might hasten their returne into
 Egypt, to know more nercelye the Lords will
 and pleasure in time conuenient. Merilye they
 finding their money in their sacks, could not o-
 therwise iudge but that God caused it so to be.
 What is this that God hath doon vnto vs? say
 they. Wherefore their Cozne being spent, part-
 ly to restore their suspected money, and partly
 to deliuer *Simeon* out of captiuitie, they are
 compelled to goe againe into Egypt, and to car-
 ry *Beniamin* their yongest brother with them,
 as they had promised: *Genes. 43.* neither could
 they procure cozne to be brought them by any
 other meanes. But whilest they going away
 the second time, their father *Iacob* prayeth and
 wisheth wel vnto the in this wise, God almighti
 ty giue you mercy in the sight of the man, that
 he may deliuer vnto you your other brother, &
 this

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this *Beniamin*: the godly olde man giueth a notable testimonye, that he dooth ascribe onely vnto God alone, whatsoeuer should happen or betide, neither belongeth he that any thing could fall out Contingently or without cause. But neither is it in vaine, that at th^r fathers commaundement they carry gifts with them also. This was conuenient for those, that should not only by a vaine and long custome in a receiued kinde of gesture, but also verily and in deed giue reuerence and worship. And in that *Ioseph*, whē his b^rethzen were come, commaundeth them to be brought into his house, and great cheere to be prepared for them, afterward also maketh merrye with them, it auayleth to this end and purpose, that they beholding so great a dignitie and power, might be moued to the greater reuerence: which thing they them selues doo after a sozt confesse, when (as the Scripture maketh mention) they saide they were brought in, to th^r intent that being circumuented they might be brought into bondage, and for feare of so great a mischæse, they declared to the steward that they had brought the money againe without fraude that was found in their sakes. And afterward the silver cup by *Iosephs* procurement, being bestowed in *Beniamins* sacke, *Genes. 44.* was a mean
most

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most fitly deuised, whereby they might be admonished to yeld themselues willingly to *Ioseph* into bondage : as the wordes of *Iuda* doe not obscurely signifie. God, saith he, hath found out the wickednes of thy seruants: beholde we are seruants to my Lord, both wee, and he with whom the Cup is found. To which ende appertaineth the long oration made there touching that matter. At the length when the brethren had now so oftentimes worshipped him, so oftentimes saluted him as their Lord and Master, *Ioseph* seeing the true meaning of his dreames to be fulfilled, openeth him selfe *Genes. 45.* vnto them, signifying that he is the very selfesame *Ioseph*, whom they long before had solde to the *Ismaelites* trauailing into Egypt: and to the end he might rid them of feare, he esteemes repeateth, that he was not sent thither of them, but of the Lord, and that verily to the safetie and preservation of them all. And certes with so many sundrye euents and dangers comming betwixen, growing in no wise by Contingence or Haphazard, ought that once to be perfourmed, which the Lord had preordained touching *Ioseph*: and by what meane God prouided in the cause of *Ioseph* such an end, by the same also prouided he all thinges which he knew would be necessary
and

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and fitte to the same end. Last of all, whē the olde father *Jacob* (*Genes. 46.*) goeth with his whole familie into *Egypt*, that it came to passe by Gods disposition, euery man may vnderstande euen by his wordes vnto *Jacob* in the same Chapter set downe: Feare not, saith he, to goe downe into *Egypt*, for I will make thee a great nation, I will goe downe with thee into *Egypt*, and I will also bring thee back again. And by this occasion not only is brought to an ende that which *Ioseph* (taught of God by a dreame) had foreseene should be fulfilled in him self, but also that which God two hundred yers before had foretolde vnto *Abraham*, to witte, that it would come to passe that his posteritie should sojourne and serue in a strange land. Very wonderfull doubtlesse and ioyfull it is to consider, by what meanes and proceedings God bringeth his determinations to passe.

And hitherto touching the History of *Ioseph*: wherupon (inasmuch as it doth moste clærlye teach, that nothing though neuer so vile, and abiect, in apparāce, to mans reason, cometh to passe contingently or by haphazard) we haue so much the more willingly witten all these things at large, for that our hope is, that godly and well disposed mindes may hereby take an example, how in other holy Histories also they

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they ought to obserue and mark the force and power of Gods prouidence euery where busily occupied.

Now to the other Historie touching *Absolon* seeking by fraud and force to inuade his Fathers Kingdome. We wil dispatch the matter in fewe words. How God diuersely punisheth sinnes, neither suffreth he any to liue so securely, but that he afflicteth them oftentimes with græuous distresses. although otherwise excellent men and deær vnto God, we may beholde it euen in *Dauid* alone : who after he had committed adultery fell also into man-slaughter, and therfore he was to see his owne house plagued with ynfamy of most shamefull whooredomes and murders : with whooredome, when his daughter *Thamar* was defiled wth her brother *Ammon* : and with murder, when *Absolon* slue his brother *Ammon* at a banquet. But that that followeth, is farre moze græuous. The same *Absolon* after threë yærs banishment by reason of the murder which he had committed, being returned home, and receiued into fauour, attempted most wickedly to thrust his own father from the Kingdome, and to get it to himselfe by force. Wherefore in this historie let vs see first of all the scope and drift of Gods purpose. God had determined to bring these things

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things to passe, as we may easilye gather by the very order and course of the things done: first and principally to exercise and humble *David* with sondry battayles, to the end he might afterward aduance him to the greater glozy: secondly to destroy proud and subtil *Absolon*: and thirdly by the same occasion, in bringing a great slaughter vpon y^e people for their sins, to reduce them into the right way. Now let vs weigh and consider, by what meanes God ordayned these things to be accomplished. Certainly y^e beginnings are wonderfull. *Absolon* first and foremost provided him Chariotes and horse-men, also a company of men to guard his body or to goe before him: *2 Sam. 15.* further by saluting and embracing priuately euery man that he met withall, and likewise by taking vp all mens matters and causes to himselfe, he did most liely get and procure the good will and fauour of the whole people. For why, by this glittering shewe & glorious furniture, together with a counterfet kinde of incomparable curtesie, it beuoned the poore ignorant people to be deluded, which should afterward cleaue vnto him. In which behalfe there appeareth a sensible argument of Gods wrath. For looke whome the Lord will destroy, those first he blindeth, that seeing they may not see, and

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& embrace false good things for true. Where
furthermore he feigneth, that he must pay his
bow and offer sacrifice in *Hebron*, and for that
cause obtayneth leaue of his father to goe thi-
ther. Suborning and sending forth some before,
that in giuing a signe by the sound of a Trum-
pet, should spread abroad and giue out speech
on euery side, y he reigned as King in *Hebron*:
this doubtles was a very fit occasion to bring
the matter to passe, then the which could not
be deuised a better or more conuenient: & that
the same was so prouided of God, we will est-
sones make plaine and manifest. So let this
passe, how y the crafty Jfor gaue a notable tes-
timony of Gods prouidence, whē he said, that
what time he remayned in *Geshur*, he vowed
to the Lord (if at any time he shold bring him
backe againe to the Citie) a sacrifice or peace
offring in *Hebron*. For why he acknowledged
that he was banished by the will of the Lord,
and againe that he was restored by the same
will. Further *Dauid* hauing heard of the tu-
multe raysed by *Abolon* and of the rage of the
people, being in great heimes and perplexitie
escaped by flight, accompanied with a huge
multitude, wherein also were the Priests bea-
ring with them the Arke of the couenant. But
that all these things were done by the ordi-
nance

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nance of God himselſe, and from the ſame all manner of ſucceſſe was to be looked for, *Dauid* very plainly confeſſed, when as ſending backe the *Præſte* and *Leuites* vnto *Hieruſalem*, he ſpake in this ſorte vnto them: Carry the Arke of God againe into the Citie, if I ſhall finde fauour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me againe, and ſhew me both it, and the tabernacle therof: But if he thus ſay, I haue no delight in thee, beholde, heere am I, let him do to me as ſeemeth good in his owne eyes. A notable confeſſion of a minde iudging all thinges to be gouerned by y^e only prouidence of God. Not long after, when *Dauid* heard ſay that y^e great wiſe man *Ahitophel* was reuolted to *Absolon*, what ſaith hee? Turne, I pray thee O Lord, the counſell of *Ahitophel* into fooliſhnes For why it is a certain trueth, that all our thoughts, willes and counſels are moued and directed euerie kinde of way by the Lord himſelf. Moreover when hee perſwadeth *Huſher*, to conuey himſelf alſo with ſpeed to *Absolons* camp, ſuppoſing that hee might conueniently bring to naught the counſell of *Ahitophel*: It is an euident argument, that ſecond cauſes may indeed doe ſomewhat, but neither more nor leſſe, nor furtherworth then to him that is the firſt cauſe yea and the cauſe of all cauſes, ſhall ſeem god
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and expedient. Whereas in the 16. chap. wicked *Simei* commeth forth cursing and reviling, keeping a quoyle, and casting stones also bothe at *Dauid* and at those that were with him: godly *Dauid* interpreteth euen this thing also to be done by Gods ordinance, and therfore forbiddeth him to be stricken by *Abizai* the sonne of *Zeruiah*, or by any meanes to be letted or prohibited. In that he so curseth, saith he, he doth it, euen because the Lord hath bidden him curse *Dauid*: who dare then say, wherfore hast thou doone so? Thus verilye that this thinge ought to be accomplished, not contingētly, but necessarily, he willingly acknowledgeth. And he addeth: Beholde my sonne, which came out of mine own bowels, seeketh my life: then how much more now may this sonne of *Iemini*? He layeth alike both the wicked attempts of *Ab-solon*, and desperate saucynes of *Simei* vpon the prouidence of God. It followeth in the same place: Suffer him to curse, for the Lord hath bidden him (note that he saith, bidden) It may be that the Lord will look on my affliction, and do me good for his cursing this day. By which wordes it plainly appereth, that wicked *Simei* boasteth forth to so heinous a fact, by the very wil and impulsio of the Lord himselfe: but yet that the Lord can, when it pleaseth him, turne the

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malice of *Simei* to *Dauids* good.

Now how in like manner, through the disposition of Gods providence. y^e counsell of wise *Ahitophell* was ouerthrowne by *Hushai*, according as *Dauid* had desired, may out of that long narration Chap. 17. be sufficiently vnderstood: but chiefly out those words of y^e scripture which are added afterward: The Lord had determined, saith he, to destroye the good counsell of *Ahitophell*: and the cause is added, comprehending a reason of the whole matter: That the Lord might bring euil vpon *Absolon*. Wherefore the Lord gouerneth mens mindes and willes, yea and inclineth them after a sorte, so as they are caried after euil: and whatsoever is here done by *Absolon*, is done by the Lords disposition. By like reason it came to passe, that *Ahitophell* was so fierce & cruell against his owne life, that he went and hanged him selfe.

In that behalf it pleased the Lord to reuenge his trechery, and to bring to passe, that euill counsell (according to the Proverb) might be scene to fall out worst to the counsellour himselfe. Further touching them that were sent vnto *Dauid*, to shew him the counsell of *Hushai* and likewise through what policie they were saued from their enemies hands by a woman, it were long to declare: yet in the mean season
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that all things were don by Gods prouidence: it may sufficiently apper by those things, that are spokē of *Hushai*, which fled at *Dauids* commaundement. For loke from whome the end floweth, and from the same also (without question) must be deriued the meanes tending to the same end.

Now the things that follow Chap. 18. touching the conflict of both the armies, touching the twenty thousand that were slayne of *Absolons* parte, and touching the miserable end of *Absolon* himselfe, that they can by no meanes be referred to contingence or haphazard, the very wordes of the Scripture doe abundantly testifie, wherby whatsoeuer came to passe, is ascribed onely to Gods prouidence. For so we heard befoze, That the Lord would bringe cuill vpon *Absolon*. And in this self same Chap. 18. *Ahimaaz* saith of *Dauid*: The Lord hath deliuered him out of the hand of his enemies. Againe the same man to *Dauid*: Blessed be the Lord thy God, who hath shut vp the men that lift vp their hands against my Lord the King.

And immediatly after *Chusi* also saith vnto him: The Lord hath deliuered thee this day out of the hand of all that rose vp against thee. We see clearly they all doe confesse, that euery thing was done by the wil and dispensation of God,

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and that it cannot be said without the greates iniury of Gods name that any thing came to passe casuallye or by chance-medley. Thus much of *Absolon*, and I think, inough. For in that *David* after a sorte did beare here a type of Christ, and they that cleaued to him a type and figure of the Church: on the other side in that *Absolon* with his adhearants shadowed out the persecutozs and enemies of the gospel, and that by the diuine pzouidence so ordaining as in many other actions of the holy ffather, we know a type and figure of thinges to be accomplished by Christ apæred, there is no cause why we should enter now into this field. Merily I suppose that these two examples are of vs in such wise discussed and declared, as that euery man hereafter may easlye without any difficultie, by himselfe finde out and determine in other holy discourses also by like occasiõ the places commending the force & power of Gods pzouidence: especially seeing there is scarce any narration to be found in the holy Scriptures, wherein are not some such places intermired, and that almoste appæring manifest to sight. And it behoueth vs to iudge, that it was pzocured by the singuler purpose and counsell of the holy ghost, that such and so many places do euery where come to hand. For why, they
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do not only preach and set forth Gods prouidence working al in al things, which in trueth can neuer sufficiently be blazed and displayde as it deserueth: but also further they comprehend manifolde and the same most swöete and holesome doctrine. For they will vs especially to acknowledge our owne weakenes and miserie: they admonish vs to learne to depend wholly vpon God alone, to commend all our actions all our life long vnto him: they stirre by faith in vs: they inuite vs to continuall inuocation of the grace and helpe of God: they counsell vs to take in god parte, what soeuer happeneth amongst men, and so they moue vs to modesty. patience & long sufferance: finally they propound vnto vs in all thinges that come to passe, the diuine power, godnes, righteousness, attentiuely to be marked, and euer moze to be praised. Seeing therfore these places are such, let no man be of this minde to think y they are carelessly to be passed ouer.

Wherfore by all these things we haue sufficiently and clærely enough proued, that neither to fate or Destiny, nor to Chaunce, nor to fortune, nor to Contingence or haphazard may any place be giuen at al in our sacred philosophy, where iust regard is had of Gods prouidence, and the same woorthily esteemed.

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Whither the Prouidence of God imposeth a necessitie to thinges provided. *Chap. 6.*

NOW some men may say: If nothing at all cometh to passe Contingentlye or by Vapazard, noz nothing by necessitie of Consequence, then it followeth, that all thinges come to passe by necessitie (as they call it) Absolute, yea and that all thinges that happen, are accomplished by a certaine vncchangeable and vnauoydable necessitie, so as they cannot possibly chuse but be done. And is this in any wise to be graunted? To this obiection or question we will answer in fewe wordes.

1 First, if we list not to strue about wordes or sentences, but are content to vse those, that we see oftentimes to be met withal in the holy Scriptures: nothing forbiddeth but that we may say simplye, that all thinges come to passe by necessitie, and that it is impossible but the thinges should be accomplished which the Lord hath ordained to be done. For after this sort Christ him self saith simply, It is necessary that offences should come: It is impossible but that offences should come againe. All thinges must be fulfilled which were written of him by the Prophets. And thus it was necessarie, that Judas should sell and betraye Christe to the Jewes

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Jewes for many: it was necessary, that Peter should deny Christ thrice: it was necessary that Christ should suffer, &c. So we see Christ spake plainly touching the things that might be thought indeed to come to passe Contingently or by Vap hazard, and yet could they not otherwise chuse but come to passe: yea it was as necessary that those things should be accomplished, as it is necessary that God should be most good, iust, mighty: inasmuch as it behooved them all to be done to the manifesting of Gods goodnes power and righteousness. What need is there then to fetchend and fantasticall phrases of speech or distinctions out of the store houses of the philosophers, when as the Holy-ghost him selfe (whome we must confesse to be the best master of speaking in Diuinitie, and whom to follow is most safe) hath squared out vnto vs such as are most proper and exquisite, and to the busines we haue in hand wonderfully concordant and agreeable: Thus much therefore touching the manner of speaking to the question propounded.

2 But as touching the thing it selfe inasmuch as we haue sufficiently proued, that nothing can possiblye come to passe without the dispensation of Gods prouidence, how vile or base soener that apereeth to mans reason that

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is brought to passe : further that by the same are governed and directed euen the very minds and wils of men, yea and turned too and fro, whither soeuer that (as the Shipmaster) shall moue them : againe that prouidence can by no meanes, seeing it is eternall & immutable, be disapointed of determinate effectes : out of all these things is gathered no doubtfull or perplexed conclusion, namelye that it must of necessitie be accomplished, and that it cannot be but accomplished, whatsoeuer Gods prouidence hath once ordeined to be brought to passe: neither shal it be any offence to say, that all things come to passe by necessitie of Gods prouidence.

3 Some, when they heare speaking of this matter, seeke starting holes, saying that there is no such necessitie brought vpon things by Gods prouidence, especiall ye that any should doe euill, but that God onely foreknewe and foresawe the so to doe: and that some are such, not because God foreknew they would be such, but rather y he therfore foreknew the, for that they should become such of their own accord, but this verily is nothing els, then to reiect y cause of prouidence, and to take vp an other touching foreknowledge. So must we in no wise doe. If we shall firste speake of foreknowledge, we must

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must doubtlesse be well resolued, and conclude (as is mæte) that God soze knew all thinges that are oꝛ euer shall come to passe, neither may we thinke that any thing can come to passe cōtrary to his soꝛeknowledge. But from hence we must also proceed to prouidence, and determine with our selues, that according to this, God, ouer and besides that he knewe before the sequeale and succeses of thinges, doth also further by this insarcheable wisdom oꝛder and dispose all thinges, as we haue already offentimes and with effectuall and substantial reasons proued and declared: neither that there is any thing among the creatures either so vile oꝛ glozious, which may iustly be exempted from the iurisdiction of prouidence. Which seeing it is so, it is plaine and euident, that God as he soꝛeknew all thinges, so also he prouided them, yea and euen then when they are accomplished, doth stil rule and gouerne them: and therfoze they are simply of necessitie in such a state and condition, as they are perceived to be in, and that because thꝛough the woꝛking already of prouidence they cannot otherwise be. And soꝛeknowledge doubtlesse sameth after a soꝛte to depend vpon prouidence. For the Lord knew before how and after what soꝛt he would deale with euery man, yea euen before

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before he had made any man: but he therefore foreknewe it, because he had even then also preordained, how and after what sort he would haue every man to be dealt withall. Foreknowledge therefore & prouidence ought to be considered severally and apart, and that verily as working most chafely once, and discharging her office before the creation of thinges: and this as working in and throughout all time, and remoned from none of those thinges which are made.

4 Neither is there any cause in y mean while, why the Lord should be blamed in anything: seeing we are sure, that whatsoeuer is done of him, is done either to declare his power & to set forth his glory, or to commend his iustice, or to extoll his goodnes: albeit these causes are not alwaies so easie to be seene of vs, and they do oftentimes altogether escape vs. For who hath knowne the counsels of the Lord: Notwithstanding the rule of faith remaineth vndoubted and infallible, That whatsoeuer God dooth, he dooth it for the best. For why, the fall of our first parents, y hardening of *Pharaoh*, and the falsehoo of *Judas*, were prepared as well to good ends and purposes, as the constancy of *Noah* in faith, the humilitie of *David*, the repentance and confession of *Peter*. Yea *Pauls* perse

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persecution brought some fruite with it as wel as his preaching, and his cruelty that went before made the thinges that followed after to become more famous and notable in him. And certes that those thinges should be accomplished which doe manifestlye proue God to be most good, most mighty, and most iust, it is very necessary, neither can they or ought they by any meanes to be intermitted: therfore all thinges that come to passe, whither they be good in themselves, or in our iudgement euill, inasmuch as they are such, there is no cause why we should be afraid to say, that they come to passe by necessitie, no more then we will be afearde to saye, that God is of necessitie most good, most iust, and most mighty.

5 And least of all may hence be taken any occasion of pretending, that we are innocent whilest we sinne, as those that could not doe otherwise then the diuine prouidence had ordeined, and so to lay the cause of our condemnation vpon God himselfe. This reason might indeed stand in force, if so be we committed sin by compulsion and against our wils, and in no wise giue any consent therunto. But it is a plaine ease, that our naughtye will is at all times so whollye caried vnto euill, delighted with euill, and accustomed in euill, that what
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foeuer euill there is in any action, that verily commeth altogether from vs: insomuch that by vs is defiled & made euill, euen that which otherwise the Lord (as touching that which he worketh in it) had appointed to god, yea to many god ends and purposes. Whereby it commeth to passe, that albeit we do all things by the disposition of Gods prouidence: yet nevertheless we do euill by our owne defaulte, and euidently declare that the matter and cause of our perdition is in our selues. For vnto one and the selfesame action both the Lord putteth to his hand, & we also do work: but considering that he doth it farre otherwise and to a farre other end then we, it followeth, that vnto him redoundeth the whole praise of power, iustice and goodnes, and we purchase to our selues eternall destruction. Concerning which matter we haue spoken elsewhere.

To conclude therfore, seeing Gods prouidence is the perpetuall and vchangeable disposition and administration of all thinges: and from this the will of God can in no wise be separated (for whatsoever God prouideth, it is certaine also that he willeth the same: and againe whatsoever he willeth, it is certaine that he prouideth) which is it selfe also perpetuallly

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tuallly one and the same and immutable, and that whatsoeuer the Lord willeth, is of necessitie accomplished: doubtles al Godly mindes doe see and perceiue, that as all thinges are administered by Gods prouidence, so also come they to passe by necessitie: to which effect *Augustine* also De Libero arbitrio lib.3. Cap. 3. is not afraide to say, That the Lords will is our necessitie.

Howbeit least I should altogether passe in silence, what the Schoole-men haue iudged concerning this present question, as being desirous to conceale, if any thing make against vs: certes I finde that *Thomas Aquinas*, one of the chiefe ringleaders among them, doth unfold himselfe with this distinction in quest.22. articulo 4. of the first part of his *Summary* look, saith he, to what effectes God hath prepared necessary causes, they must of necessitie come to passe: and to what effectes he hath prepared contingent causes, they must contingently come to passe. And againe in the same place, it cometh to passe infallibly and necessariely which the diuine prouidence disposeth to come to passe infallibly and necessariely, and it cometh to passe contingently, which the diuine prouidence will haue to come to passe contingently. But vpon what foundation I pray you are these

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these distinctions grounded? Again, is not this to teach ignotum per ignotius, and to put forth one obscure thing by an other? For how canst thou tell, what causes are necessarie or contingent with God? and what he hath ordained to be done either by the one or by the other? Last of all, what els is as yet said, then that howsoever at length any thinges come to passe, the same come to passe by Gods dispensation, and by his immutable will? Thou seest therfore plainely, that these distinctions are certaine snares of wordes, wherewith the vnlearned are intangled and caught, in such wise as they cannot look ouer nœrely into y^e trueth, and referre all thinges onelye vnto God, giuing all glozy to him alone. How much better doth Cardinal *Caietan* weigh this cause, who in the Commentaries which he put forth vpon the *Summary* of his great master *Thomas* doth sufficiently signifie, that these reasons do not satisfie him: and among other thinges he saith expressely, that that which is once ordayned of God, is of necessitie ineuitable touching God, and therefore also of necessitie ineuitable simply, as well as touching God. And we may gather out of those wordes which he addeth, that he would haue saide much moze to this purpose, but that he feared other mens iudgements

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mentes touching himselfe.

Wherefore he that is wise, will holde and defend that opinion, which he saith to be most agreeable with the phrases of the Scripture, and to auaille most to defend the dignitie of prouidence, and to set forth the gloze of God.

That the thinges which haue hitherto beene declared touching the Prouidence of God, auaille very much, as well to many other spirituall commodities, as also especially to the fetching of comfortes from thence against all perilles and dangers whatsoeuer. *Cap. 7.*

Hitherto I suppose all thinges in a maner which are necessary to be knowne to the iudging and speaking aright of Gods prouidence, haue of vs bene discussed: and certes our treatise is drawen to a further length, then we thought it would. Now the matter requireth, we turne our speech, to that thing which we cheefelye intended throughout this whole worke: that is to say, that we begin to shew, how a more plentifull matter of consolations cannot from any other place be ministred to afflicted mindes, then out of the diligent consideration of Gods diuine prouidence. And verily it is not either for vaine ostentation, or
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foz the exercise of the witte, neither to stir by contentious and tragicall disputations, and much lesse to feede or nourishe fond curiositie, whereby a number delight to deuise many thinges touching high and misticall pointes, which they themselves doe in no wise vnderstand, that a godly minde must be conuersant in the inquisition of these diuine and therfoze difficult matters: but either to increase in our selues and other of our brethren wholesome doctrine: or to gather fruitfull exhortations, which we may applye as occasion shall serue, to the slothfull and dull: or to the reproving of those, that are vnhappily fallen into wicked opinions or mischeuous dedes: or (to be short) to the drawing forth of comforts and consolations, wherby their spirites that are troubled partelye with inward and partelye with outward distresses, may in time be quickened and reuiued. ffoz vnto these endes as to the right scope and marke that all our knowledge of diuine matters is to be directed, we are taught by the Apostle *Rom. 15.* and *2. Tim. 3.* If foz any other causes knowledge be gotten, it is then fit, not to edifie, but to destroy onely, and becometh pernicious both to the teacher himselfe and also to the schollers. And albeit out of this pzeent treatise touching Gods prouidence,

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dence, might be drawen manifolde aswell doctrine, and exhortations, and reprehensions, as also other very profitable & necessarie instructions: yet neuerthelesse accordingly as we undertook to do at y beginning of our work, her in chesely shall our speech be spent, euen to declare and shew, that it is most aneable to the procuring of comfortes against all perills and dangers whatsoever: onely we will promise a fewe things touching the excellency of this doctrine. Wherefore that this maye the better be don of vs, it shalbe conuenient briefly to call to remembrance the principall heads of those things which we haue discoursed touching prouidence, and to drawe them all as it were into a summary conclusion.

1 First therfore we haue defined, the prouidence of God to be a perpetuall and vchangeable disposition and administration of al things that be. Which definitio we did estones with many and forcible testimonies of the holy scripture make both more clere and certaine, rendering a reason besides of euery word put therein, so farresforth as the matter seemed to require.

2 But least any man deceiued by the subtil perswasions of mans reason, or by the craftie snares of Philosophers flowing from mans

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brayne, might thinke that the force of Gods providence could not stand, and so suspect it to be a thing of nothing: we brought forth certaine argumentes, which the deceiuers are wont to vse, and forthwith conuincd them, bringing in steade of them both manye other and of farre greater waighte, which proued moze cleere then the light at noone daies, that God hath a speciall care of all thinges created.

3 Next for orders sake in teaching, and leass we should vnadvisedly or confusedly intermirt any thing taken from any other place, not agreeing to our present purpose: we thought good to note in few wordes, how and wherin providence differeth from the foreknowledge, predestination and wisdom of God.

4 Which thinges being declared, we came moze narely to search of what nature Gods providence is: that is to saye, what it doth, what it can do, how and after what sort it is occupied in the gouernment and administration of all thinges. And here againe not vnwillingly we recounted the opinions of the Philosophers touching that matter, coueting euen by this meanes to set befoze all men to be obserued, how vnure a thing it is in examining of diuine matters, to follow the iudgement of foolish reason, and to determin any thing, with
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out consulting with the treasorie of the Holy
ghoske, that is to saue, the sacred Scriptures.
Then next we added, what mindes also our
men, that is to witte, such as professed sound
and sincere religion, were off. And inasmuch
as some of these acknowledged onely and vni-
uersall prouidence of God, ruling and modera-
ting all thinges by a generall motion, leauing
in the meane time to euery creature a certain
force and power of working, after the inclina-
tion of it owne nature: and othersome also
graunted that the actions of men are gouerned
of the same, but yet only of a fewe and especi-
ally the elect: we taking a better course, haue
obserued and marked what we thought to be
most agreeable to the holy Scriptures, and to
be most clearely expessed in them, further we
considered what was allowed by the consent
of the best and most ancient Fathers, and this
resolution we gathered and gaue forth to be
imbraced, namely that Gods prouidence doth
not only vniuersally gouerne the worlde and
all the thinges therin contained, but also e-
specially and particularly dispose, procure and
moderate euery thing, yea and direct the adi-
ons of euery thing to their appointed endes.
Which sentence to shewe that it was appro-
ued of the Fathers, we noted some thinges of

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it gravely and godlily auouched by them.

5 But because I was not ignozant, that many would be ready with tooth and naile (as they say) to rise vp against this doctrine, especially such as were onermuch addicted to the iudgement of reason, when they heare the ppozidence of God byted abzoard to be so farre forth occupied and distracted in and about euery thing, they by and by imagine and crye out, that a number of absurdities doe heereby follow: and first forsooth that the freedome of mans will is utterly ouerthrowne: 2, y God seemeth to be the cause of sinne and of our condemnation: 3, that all second causes are vniuersally excluded: 4, and by this meanes that the damned opinion of y *Storke*s touching Fate is againe established: 5, that Fortune and Chaunce are disannulled and taken awayne: 6, that Contingence or Vaphazard is denied, for auouching notwithstanding wherof some deuines of this age think they may striue with might and maine: for these mers sakes I say, we are compelled in order to speak more large ly touching euery obiection, and what we thought to be most safe for the behoufe of Chri stian consciences, and for the dignitie of sound doctrine, franklye and freelye to vtter and declare. Wherefoze what and of what sorte the freedome

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freedome of our will is in euery kinde of actions, and what it is able to do without y^e helpe of Gods prouidence, we haue faithfullye opened. Againe y^e God is in no wise the cause of sinne, neither that our damnation is to be imputed vnto him, besides that lawes are not made without good cause, and the guilty punished, we haue with proofes and reasons not of the meanest sorte made plaine and manifest. Likewise second causes in what account they are to be had. how farre forth they are of force, and when they may rightly be vsed and applied, we haue not letted to tell.

6 Further that the doctrine touching speciall or particular prouidence doth in no part agree with the *Stoikes* doctrine touching fate or destiny: also that Chaunce or fortune hath no place in our Philosophy: lastly that Contingence or Vaphazard cannot truely be avouched, where the due knowledge of Gods prouidence is extant. and the same worthily esteemed: we haue with no fruitlesse discourse (as we trust) declared at large. And this is the summe of those thinges which haue of vs been taught as touching Gods prouidence. Now we wil speak of y^e fruites that are from thence to be gathered.

First as concerning the doctrine: doubtles

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this knowledge is notable and necessarye, and right worthy to be diligentlge taught and let forth in Chyistian congregations, namelye that God as he once most excellently and orderly made and created all things by his only power and wisdom, so doth he still rule and gouerne them, committing his authoritie to none, neither standing in need of any secondary helpe. Againe that in these inferior things here belowe, and chafelye in mens matters, there is no place to be giuen to Fortune or Fate, neither cometh any thing to passe by Chaunce or Contingence. But to what end do I reapeate these things in this order? what soeuer hath of vs hitherto bene declared touching the prouidence of God, and sufficientlge approued by the testimonies of holy scripture, all that may and ought to be taken for excellent doctrine, and such as floweth from y^e fountaine of Gods word. I will adde a few things touching the excellencie and necessitie of this doctrine.

1^{ly} Verily I dare be bolde to say, that among many places of heauenlye philosophie, though otherwise right notable and rich, there is none extant so commodious and plentifull, wherby the glozy of almighty God may be enlarged and illustrated amongst vs, as is this place
which

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which we haue handled touching Gods prouidence: and specially if it be shewed (in such sort as we haue done) that this prouidence is not only vniuersall, but also special and particular. For to take a charge and haue a care of every thing, and not of mens affaires onely, but of every creature also, far beneath the state and degree of men: besides to haue such a care and regarde of mens matters, as euen their minds, and willes also are directed to certaine actions and determinate endes: this doubtlesse must be acknowledged a very diuine worke, and that surely such a one, as wherein the power and glozve of God are seene most clarely to shine and appere.

2 And what shall we say to this mozeouer? that looke in what accompte and regarde that confession of faith is had, wherby we acknowledge God to be God, and the same almighty, and in the selfesame (if we weigh euerie thing aright) is this doctrin also of Gods prouidence to be accepted and taken. For it is in dæde the very ground and foundation of our faith. For why, he that acknowledgeth in God his prouidence, especially particular (wherof we haue principally entreated) he vnboughtly it is that doth rightly comprehend that principall article of our religion, and confesseth, what is

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in very deed to be ascribed and attributed vnto God: on the other side, he that reiecteth prouidence, sinneth no lesse nor otherwise, then if he denied God to be almighty.

But to proceed how shall a man fully giue vnto God this praise, that he is the creator of heauen and earth, vnlesse we doe graunt in like manner, that the same is the most & the administrator and conseruator of all things in them contained: sith in very deede it were most strange and absurde to thinke, that he that is best of himself, should neglect, or by any means cast from himself, and commit vnto others, the things that he hath once created: and that he that is almighty should not be able to susteine and beare the burthen and charge of all these things. Wherelye therfore, by this doctrine touching Gods prouidence we are instructed and confirmed in the true acknowledgement and confession of faith: and if so be we count and desire to be taken and accompted in the number of those, that consent and agree with the vniuersall Church in sound and true faith, believing in one God almighty maker of heauen and earth: then doubtlesse is it requisite and behouefull, that we confesse in like case the prouidence of God effectually working all in all.

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4 Inasmuch as it is very necessary and expedient to haue the will of God allwaies before our eyes, and that we ought as well in the first creation as in the perpetuall conseruation of all things to consider the same, haue it in admiration, & extoll it with praise: there is no man but seeth, that we can no other waies be brought to the doing of this, then by the exact vnderstanding of Gods prouidence, by the which alone all thinges come to passe, and amongst them all nothing in vain or without cause. Neither is there any doubt, but that the Lord himself would haue vs to be stirred vp to the continuall beholding of his prouidence, when as by his sonne he taught vs to pray duely, that his wil might be don in earth as it is in heauen, for why, to pray that Gods will may be done, what els is it, then to attribute and commit all things to his prouidence?

5 And by this consideration of Gods will we learne to iudge most truely and rightlve of all thinges that come to passe, and not otherwise to determin of them, then that they do altogether fall out to the illustration of Gods glory, and to the procurement of the saluation of the godly. For whatsoever it be that cometh to passe, the Lord vndoubtedly turneth it to some good, although we can by no meanes perceiue,

perceiue, how o2 after what so2t the same is accomplished. For like as the p2ouidence of God hath allwaies his omnipotencie ioyned with it, euen so is his excellent wisdom, neuer remoued from the same. And againe, where all thinges fall out by his singuler wisdom, it cannot be thosen but that the same doe fal out and are disposed to many god endes and purposes.

6 Last of all, sith the first way to saluation is, to humble our selues vnder the mightye hand of God, to acknowledge our own weaknes, to depend wholly and alone vpon God, to looke for all thinges profitable and commodious from him, and to ascribe all thinges that happen and come to passe to the same: and further are most clærely taught by this treatise of p2ouidence, how all these thinges ought to be done and accomplished by vs: it is a plaine case, that without the knowledge and confession of p2ouidence, we can by no meanes attaine vnto saluation. To conclude (that I tarry not long) he cannot truely professe his faith in God, he cannot pray aright, he cannot behold and acknowledge the good wil and pleasure of God in all his wo2kes: he cannot ascribe vnto God the glo2y of his excellent power, wisdom, godnes, &c. as he deserueth: he cannot humble himselfe (as is meet) before God,

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God, to craue his mercy or aide, that imbrasseth not the doctrine of Gods prouidence, or doth not purely vnderstand the same. And thus much touching the excellencie and necessitie of this doctrine.

Now concerning the comforts, wherunto we would haue especially to be referred all that hath been spoken touching prouidence, we must intreat moze fully and at large. Before all thinges, it is no hard matter to declare, that as wel the definition of Gods prouidence as also those proofes, wherby we haue proued, y prouidence is necessarily established against the swinish bred of Epicures & others (whose mindes being deeply drenched in the quagmire of carnall opinions, can by no meanes be lifted vp to the contemplation of spirituall and heauenly thinges) doe minister most large and ample matter of comforts and consolations.

Certainly sith the whole life of man is continually subiect to innumerable and the same very pernicious dangers, either open or secret, there is no cause why we should think, that any man can be in safety one minute of an hour vnlesse he be preserved by the speciall prouidence of God. Whither soeuer a man turneth himselfe, doubtlesse he is of all creatures the most wofull and miserable, except he perceiue
him

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himselfe to be enuironed & vpholden with the ayde and assistance of Gods prouidence.

Consider I pray thee (whosoener thou art) a little moze diligently, the thinges which we shall by&efelpe rehearse touching this matter. If thou hast to do with any persons, as thou canst not chise but thou needes must: yet behold how doubtfull and fearfull all thinges will be vnto thee, where the minde resteth not in the prouidence of God. Some man embraceth thee very frændly to out ward appéarance, and also entertaineth thee with a kisse: but vnder the couler of this flattering gesture *Amasa* is thrust through of *Ioab*, & our Lord and master *Christ* is of *Judas* his disciple betraied into the handes of his enemies: 2. Sam. 20. Luk. 22. Somebody calleth thee forth to walk into the fields: so was godly *Abel* circumuented by his brother *Cain*, and killed: Genes. 4. Thou art bidden to some great feast or banquet: but by this meanes *Abfolon* entertainde his brother *Ammon*, & slew him: 2. Sam. 13. What I say nothing of other horrible mischices, as of brawlings and contentions, of poysoned pickles or sauces, of the hurt of health by excess, and such like, which (alas for sorrow) we see too often to arise by feastinges. Thou visitest thy sicke frænd to help him or comfort him as thou canst:
but

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but thou knowest whilest *Thamar* did so much
very dutifully, she was defiled by her brother
Ammon: 2 *Sam.* 13. thou knowest further that
the contagion of the disease doth by this occa-
sion oftentimes passe vnto others also, whilest
one is sick of the plague or pestilence, an other
of the Leprosie, an other of some other disease,
wherby the place wherin the sick partie lyeth,
and euen the Ayre it self is corrupted and made
hurtfull. Thou hast occasion to bargain with
some body : but there is no kinde of contract or
bargaine, wherunto are not adioyned a thou-
sand feates of deceit : & to the hindzance wherof
(least it should fall out, according to thy desire)
are not deuised infinit crinks and cauillations.

Hereof may *Laban* be a witnes, that so ofte-
times contriued new shifts & delays, against
his sonne in law *Iacob* : *Gen.* 29.30.31. likewise
Saule, who cast into most greuous daungers,
that noble preseruer of his country *Dauid*, be-
fore he would giue him his daughter to wife
as he had promised : 1 *Sam.* 18. What should
I stand long: whatsoeuer thou dost, & in what
state or conditiō soeuer thou liest, thou canst
neuer be free from perrilles and danngers. If
thou hast many kinf-folkes and frēds: yet is
there cause why thou shouldst feare especiallve
some danger to proceed euen from them, which
thing

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thinge to be true the examples euen now rehearsed do teach, and that memoꝛable saying (yet too true) of the pꝛophet *Micha*: A mans enemies be they of his owne house. *Micha. 7.*

Contrarywise, if thou hast no frændes: then shalt thou be dispised of all men, and abused by euery knaue without controlment. If thou beest single, there lyeth in the wind some shamellesse dꝛab to entrap thee, such as was *Potiphars* wife the Egiptian, and for her cause (though thou be innocent) thou art dꝛawen into daunger of thy good name, of thy substance, of thy health, yea and sometimes of thy life too. If thou be disposed to marry a wife, what if thou lightest vpon such a one, as wil do nothing els but continually torment thee, adding one vexation vnto an other: as we read the wife of *Iob* did, and know that many other procured ineuitable destruction to their most honoꝛable husbands. If there come no children by marriage, no man is able to tell, what a huge heape of euills dooth followe this barrennes: hatred vnquencheable, & domesticall discorde, pensiuenes for goods to be left vnto straungers & vnthankful persons, do euen kil a man befoꝛe his time. But if there be Children, certes the notable Patriarches *Noah* & *Iacob*, *Heli* the high pꝛiest and the famous King and pꝛophet *Dauid*, being often

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oftentimes græuouſly beſſed by reaſon of the wicked pranks of their Childzen, do put thee in minde alſo of thy lot. If thou be rich, as being aduanced to great honoz and dignitie, hauing gotten the fauour of y King or Prince: yet how ſoon all this glozy may be defaced, and a man caſt downe from the higheſt to the loweſt, onely *Haman* may be a witnes: *Heſt: 7.* If thou be poore: thy very pouertie alone is a moſt heauy croſſe, as ſo: the which ſometimes ſome haue wiſhed to make erchange of life w death. To be ſhort, in what condition ſoeuer thou dealeſt, and ſo: what matter ſoeuer it be, ſo long as thou haſt to do with men, thou findeſt no doubt this common ſaying to be verified, *Homo homini Lupus*, one man becomes a Wolfe to another: neither canſt thou iudge any thing to be thoroughly ſure, or to be wel and rightly done of thee, except thy minde be reſreſhed with the remembrance of Gods prouidence, and ſo thou determin ſo: a certaintie, that thou art by the ſame defended and preſerued from all perilles and dangers whatſoeuer.

But goe to let vs ſee further, whither in thoſe things which a man enterpriſeth by him ſelfe alone and farre off from all ſelowſhip and companye of men, any thing may be founde
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boyd of displeasure or inconuenience: or whether any mans life may be so framed and fashioned in this world, as that he may liue free from all troubles and perturbations. Certes no such matter shalt thou finde, whether thou lookest vpon thinges with life, or without life, or any other creatures whatsoeuer, from the which at least may not come some occasion of hurt or damage, if so be Gods prouidence doth not help and prouide for vs & for our affaires. If thou hiddest thy selfe in a house or Cottage, one pin or nayle broken or out of square may cause the whole building to fall and so ouerwhelme thee. A silly Spider slipping from her webbe into thy bosome whilest thou sleepest, engendzeth there some hidden soze that greeueth thee. The Cat, being otherwise a domesticall and tame beast, vsuallye kept to kill mice, in the night flyeth in thy face and all to bescratcheth it. Thy Dog becomming madde, will no more forbear thee then a stranger. If thou wilt sette or rolle any thing for thee to cate (as doubtles thou canst not liue without doing of these and such like actions) a little fire perhaps maye consume the whole house: some pece of a weede being put vnawares into thy pottage pot, will procure vnto thee either sickness or death: the knife wherewith thou choppest

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choppest thine hearbes or any thing els, by a little trice, wil wound thee and perhaps without reuerie. If thou drinkest, although it be very clere water: yet it may be, that the well whence thou drwest it, some venemos worme hath infected with her poyson. But if it please thee to goe out of the house, one tyle fallinge downe may bzeake thine head and peraduenture thy braines: a little stone lying in the way causeth thee to stumble and fall, and so grauously to hurt thee. Sometimes the ayre being grosse of it self, or otherwise for the time corrupted, will hurt and impaire thy health. How many beastes thou meetest, so many enemies maist thou think thou meetest withall, which some way that thou wænest not may ouercome thee, or at the least hurt thee. If thou goest in to thy garden, which thou carefully keepest, either to delight thy minde, or to gather some thinges needefull to be eaten: there lyeth in a waite some scorpion, or other worrm as bad to bite thee. If thou sowest or plantest any thing there, besides that thou art vncertaine of the increase, euen then when greatest hope doth appere, so dauntly either beasts breaking in, or the haile falling, or the frost, or some other tempest destroyeth al that euer is, and so thou art ready to serue for any thing there

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there is left. The birdes which flye to and fro in the aier, are as it were so many traitours, Sharping their beakes and talons, to put out thine eyes. Certainly the waspe, the Hornet, the Bee, nay the Ant, or if there be any creature lesse then this, it will put thee to trouble, at one time or other. If thou goest to the waters take heed that whilst thou labourest to take vp any, thou thy selfe be not taken: whilst thou walkest or standest vpon the bank thy foote slippe not and so thou fall into the water. If thou betakest thy selfe to a ship on the Sea, know thou ther is no moment, wherein (though there apper neuer so great a calm) thou maist be bolde to make vnto thy selfe any certaine warrantize of life. If thou searchest for any thing on the earth, coueting to fetch somewhat from the depth beneath: whilst thou sweatest much a long time in digging, the ground aboue sodenly falling, or part of the pit chinking or cliuing, will peraduenture smother thee. If thou goest down into a den or dungeon, euen here likewise whatsoeuer is aboue thee, leaneeth vpon thy neck and threatheneth to fall vpon thee. If thou cline vp a steepe hill, the tripping of thy fate will cast thee downe headlong. If thou wandrest in the valley, look warily about thee, least some hidden gulse or whirlepoule

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Whirlepole doe swallowe thee, or at leastwise put thee to thy plunge. If thou art to iourneye through the wood, every tree standeth as a clubbe lifted vp aloft to kil thee.

And that I may once drawe vnto an end, ther is nothing extant in the nature of things, though otherwise necessary, and so many causes profitable to mankinde, from the which ought not againe some damage, yea & sometimes great displeasure, continually to be feared. The most beautifull Sunne, and light-som starres, without the which mans life, is to be accompted no life at all, doe yet for the time bring some discommoditie with them: as when the Sunne with his vehement heate doth debilitate and enfeeble mens bzaines, or when togither with him other celestial bodies also by their obscurations and defectes, and by their striding motions, doe procure vnto things below (ouer which they beare no small swaye) the causes of many alterations, yea & doe now and then diuersly affect and moue the very bodies and mindes of men also.

But omitting all these thinges, let vs look last of all vpon the only masse of mans bodye, and peruse the same by partes: and there is no doubt but we shall perceiue, that it is nothing els then a publike receptacle, nest and hostrye

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of miseries: and that how many small members there be in the body, so many kinds there are of dangers and diseases. What saide I, how many members? I might moze truelye say, that to euery member are pꝛocreated innumerable sortes of diseases. The eye doubtlesse is a very small part in the head: but with how many maladies thinkest thou this is encompassed? There are ingendꝛed in it the pinne and webbe, the blearenes of the eyen, the drye itch in the eye, the wart in the eye lid, the grauel in the eye, the dazeling of the eyen, the filme of the eye, the staring of the eyen, the falling of the eye liddle, the dimnesse of the eye, the poorblindnes of the eyen, the knob in the eye, the pricking in the eye, the dropping of the eyes, the squint, the swelling of the eyes, the turning of the eye liddes, the vnnaturall standing of the eye liddes, the pimple in the eye, the pearle in the eye, the scuruines of the eyen, the swelling and grossenes of the eye liddes, and who is able to reckon vp all the impediments of this sort? Now by the greceuanties of the eye alone, which yet we haue not all set downe in accompt, consider thou with thy selfe, how many and how great may be the diseases of the other members, which are farre greater and larger then y^e eye. At pitieth me doubtlesse, yea it pitieth me for
mans

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mans estate & conditiō, as oft as I enter into the cōsideration of these miseries, which man carieth about with him in his little body, neither can he euer shake them off. Will we or will we, we must graunt, that ther is nothing created amongst all liuing creatures moze wretched or vile then man, if (I meane) the weake disposition of the body be considered in it selfe. Which thing that we might the moze easilye acknowledge, and ofte call to minde, it is ordeined by God the authoz of nature, that we should fetch the first beginninges of our life immediatly from crying and weeping, and againe that we should lay down the same with great sorrow and grēfe.

Seeing all these thinges are thus, from whence I praye thee, or from what matters shal wretched man haue comfort in so great distresses, if not from this knowledge, that God taketh care of vs & of our affaires, and deliuereth vs continually out of infinite dangers? Which of vs can so much as breathe when we list, nay which of vs shalbe able to do that, if we be not certainly perswaded of the Lordes helpe that gouerneth all thinges, and he giue vs power so to do? For seeing there is iust nothing any where, in the which are not mosse certaine annoyances and perilles prepared at

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an inch, and our whol life hangeth by a twine
threadd, nay by a silly haire, so as a thousand
(I say not diseases but) deathes do continual-
ly hang ouer our heads and wander befoze our
eyes: doubtlesse we must not thinke, that we
can abide in safetie so much as one minute of
an houre, except the Lord by his wise proui-
dence and gracious good wil and pleasure doth
deliuer vs from al hurtful and noysom things.
In that beeing bozne thou wast not strangled
betwene the Midwives handes: that in the
time of thine infancie thou perishedst not by
fire oz water, oz by some other meane through
the negligence of thy parentes: that in thy
childehode and yong yeeres thou becamest
not blinde oz lame of thy lims through thine
own folly and rashnes: that being after ward
growen in age thou wast not slaine by some
body that met thee & saluted thee, oz that feig-
ned freendship with thee, oz that eat and drank
with thee, oz else by one that professed himself
to be thine open enemy: that now thou art
not beguiled, oz any other way cast into dan-
ger by some one that bargaineth with thee: in
that thou art not molested by thy neighbors,
no: iniured by strangers: in that thou art not
troubled with discommodities in mariage,
which are wont to spring partly from y^e wife,
partly

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partly from the children, and partlie from the cares of houlholde affaires: in that thou art not stripped of thy goods: in that the mightye rage not againſt thee, and thruſt thee from thy ſeate and dignitie: in that thou art not killed with the fall of thine houſe: in that thy meat and drink doe not hurt thee: in that thou art not wounded with the edge-tole, which thou handleſt: in that no beaſt doth violence vnto thee: in that thou art not drowned in the waters: in that the earth doth not open her mouth and deuoure thee: finallye in that thou art wonderfully deliuered from innumerable inconueniences, which doe dayly and continually hang ouer thine head, and proceed as well from men, as from the deuill, and from other creatures, which the deuill alſo induoureth oftentimes to turne to our deſtruction: in all theſe things I ſay, which we know are wont euer and anon to come to paſſe, and therefore ought to iudge that they may alſo take effecte and be accompliſhed in vs, thou oughteſt to admire and blaze abroad with praiſe the onely prouidence of God, yea & to aſcribe thy whole ſafetie and preſeruatiõ only and alone heere vnto. And this is that which the Pſalmes doe teach, and all the ſayings of the holy fathers in the ſacred Scriptures euery where extant,

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Wherin the Lord is celebrated as the helper of the afflicted, and the deliuerer of his out of all dangers : further also wherein thole that are deliuered, doe giue God thanks for his benefites receiued : as *Psal. 18.* declareth, how euen in the midst of tempests and other dangers the Lord yet saueth the godly. The chanel of waters, saith he, were seene, and the foundations of the worlde were discouered at thy rebuking O Lord, at the blasting of the breath of thy displeasure. He hath sent downe from aboue and taken me : he hath drawn me out of many waters. He hath deliuered me from my strong enemy, and from them that hate me. *Psal. 23.* Doth wholly tend to this effect, but especiall ye these wordes are to be considered. Albeit I should walk through the valley of the shadow of death, yet will I feare no euill, for thou art with me. *Psal. 27.* Though an host pitched against me, mine hart should not be afraide : though warre be raised against me, mine hart should not be afraide : yet will I trust in thee. *Psal. 30.* O Lord thou hast brought vp my soule out of the graue, thou hast reuiued me from them that goe down into the pit. In the same place : Thou hast turned my mourning into ioy, thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladnes. *Psal. 31.* My times are in thy hand, deliuer me from the hand

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hand of mine enemies, &c. *Pfal. 33.* Beholde the eye of the Lord is vpon thē that feare him, & vpon them that trust in his mercye: to deliuer their soules from death, and to preserue them in the time of dearth. *Pfal. 34.* The Angell of the Lord pitcheth round about them that feare him, and deliuereth them. **There also:** Many are the mi-
series of the righteous, but the Lord deliuereth them out of all. *Pfal. 37.* the Lord knoweth the daies of vpright men, & their inheritance shalbe perpetuall. They shal not be confounded in the perillous time, and in the dayes of famine they shall haue enough. *Pfal. 40.* Innumerable troubles haue compassed me: my sinnes haue taken such holde vpon me, that I am not able to looke vp: yea they are moe in number then the heares of my head, therefore my hart hath failed me. Let it please thee, O Lord, to deliuer me, make hast, O Lord, to helpe me. *Pfal. 41.* By this I know that thou fauourest me, because mine enemy dooth not triumph against me. And as for me thou vpholdest me in mine integritie, and shalt set me before thy face for euer. *Pfal. 57. 59.* *David* dooth ascribe his deliuerance vnto the prouidence of God, in that he flying *Saul* with dyew himselfe into a den, and when his house was beset by the commaundement of *Saule*, that he might haue bene taken. *Pfal. 66.* The
Lord

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Lord holdeth our soules in life, and suffereth not our feete to slippe. **Where also** ; Thou hast caused men to ride ouer our heads: we went into the fire and water, but thou broughtest vs into a wealthy place. *Psal. 71.* Thou hast giuen commaundement to saue me ; for thou art my rock and my fortresse. **In the same place.** By thee haue I bene susteyned euer since I was borne, thou art hee that tookest me out of my mothers bowells, &c. *Psal. 73.* As for me, I was alway with thee, for thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou wilt guide me with thy counsell, and afterward receiue me to glory. *Psal. 91.* **is wholly spent in this, that it teacheth most cleerelye that the Lord doth euery where take care for vs, and prouideth that we fainte not vnder the troubles which doe on euery side assaile vs. He shal deliuer thee, saith he, from the snare of the hunter, and from the noyosome pestilence. He will couer thee vnder his winges, and thou shalt be sure vnder his feathers : his trueth shalbe thy sheeld & buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid of the feare of the night, nor of the arrow that flyeth by day : nor of the pestilence that walketh in darknes, nor of the plague that destroyeth at noone day. A thousand shall fall beside thee, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee. And a little after**

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fer: There shall none euill come vnto thee, neither shall any plague come neere thy tabernacle. For he shall giue his Angels charge ouer thee to keep thee in all thy waies. They shall beare thee in their hands, that thou hurt not thy foote against a stone. Thou shalt walke vpon the Lyon and Aspe: the yong Lyon and Dragon shalt thou tread vnder thy feete, &c. The like shalt thou finde in many other *Psalmes*, especially the 104. 116. 124. 139. (this is wholly applyed to this purpose) 144. 147. And in the prophets there are very many confessions and thankes giuings of this sort, that doe wonderfully commend the perpetuall care and prouidence of God toward vs in all perils and dangers. It would be ouerlong to repeat them at this present, and some places shal afterwarde in the exposition of the 107. *Psalm*. be fitly produced: Therfore as now we omit them.

It is manifest therfore, that by this doctrine of Gods prouidence there is much comfort gotten throughout the whole life: and as ther is no time in mans life free from dangers, so ought euery one without ceassing to lifte vp and strengthen his minde with the remembrance of Gods prouidence: inasmuch as by it euen then when we would least suspect, we are euery moment deliuered from some dangers:

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gers : which as they are to be seene in some, so there is no doubt, but that they may also happen vnto vs.

Furthermoze comfortes do not hereby onely come vnto vs. in that we are taught, that by the prouidence of God continual calamities are kept from vs : but heerby also ought we to gather matter of consolation, that by the same are ministred vnto vs whatsoeuer god things are necessary to this life. For if God dispolet all thinges, and with singuler care fououret, aduanceth and defendeth vs and our matters, as we haue sufficiently at large and plainly before proued, when we taught that Gods prouidence was not onely vniuersall, but also speciall and peculiar: then doutlesse are we to look for all good things from him also. Neither may we think, that any thing shalbe wanting vnto vs, so long as we haue him fauourable that careth for vs: and much lesse that we can procure vnto our selues any thing by our owne deuises, industrie, arte, strength, vnesse he of his mercy ministreth it vnto vs. For he alone is almightie, and endued with a notable philanthropic or loue towards mankinde : wherfore vndoubtedly he both can and will giue whatsoeuer seemeth good vnto him, and our necessitie requireth. As for vs, howsoeuer we may seem
to

Prouidence.

to do any thing by our owne indurseye, or also by the helpe of others, whither it be of men, I say, or of any other creature: yet are we enforced to confesse, that the thing is farre lesse which we do (though it be neuer so smal a matter) then that it can without him be bzought to passe as we desire. It appereth in deed that we do somwhat, when we plough vp the land with our handy-labours, sowe seedes in the fallow ground, reape downe the ripe Corne, grinde the same at the mill, bake bread in the ouen: when we lay baites for fishes, set snares for birds, tend our cattell and flocks: when to accomplish greater matters, we seeke for the ayde of others that are better able to perfozm them: when we procure freendes: when we minister helpe one to an other: when we learne and haue the knowledge of sundry artes, as the craft of Taylozs, Carpenters, physick and such like, and apply the vse of them to necessary purposes: when we call vpon God by pzaier and supplication &c. but all these thinges if we weigh them aright, are nothing els then certaine instruments and meanes, or dayned and graunted of God himself, by the which it pleaseth him to work in vs, and to set forward our affayzes, insomuch that if anye thing be once well done and rightly accomplished, although we

Of Gods

we haue sweet for it, yet it is necessary that the whole praise of the wel-doing of the thing do redound to him alone as the principall author and worker of the same. For neither is the seed frutefull of it selfe: neither do fishes or fowles wittingly and willingly come into our nettes: neither doth fodder giuen to our Cattel profit them: neither is their strength auayleable, whose helpe we craue: neither is euery man straight waies mowed to frendship: neither do they alwaies requite good turnes, of whom we haue wel deserued: neither are arts and sciences by and by learned, nor their force and efficacie forthwith bewray it selfe: neither is the minde kindled vnto prayer: excepte the Lord himselfe do secretly in all these things begin to worke by his vnsercheable power, and prosecute that which he foresercheth will be profitable and holtsome vnto vs, and fit to illustrat and set forth his owne glozpe. Vaine and frivulous are all those attempts, wherunto he putteth not his helping hand. And most true is that saying of the Prophet *Psal. 127*. Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vaine that build it: & except the Lord keep the Citie, the keeper watcheth but in vayne. It is in vayne for you to rise vp early, and to lye downe late, and eate the bread of sorrow: but he will surely,
giue

Prouidence.

giue rest to his beloued. And doubtlesse if we
 should not be pertakers of our desire before we
 could bring our wished enterprizes to passe by
 our owne strength and power, how might we
 euer conceiue hope or comfote in our mindes:
 especially sith we dayly finde it true by experi-
 ence, that our attempts and indenoys, though
 other wise right honell and vertuous, are ofte-
 times easily letted and hindzed, and that we
 cannot stretch forth so much as our little fin-
 ger, nay nor direct the thought or cogitation
 of our minde, but so farreforth as he shal turn
 and dispose it. And hitherto belong the things
 which we haue before specified touching the
 freedome of mans will, and touching seconda-
 ry causes: so that euery man may clærelpe see
 and perceiue, that nothing hath bene taught
 hitherto touching Gods prouidence, which is
 not very fitte matter for comfote and consol-
 tion.

If thou hast need therfore of any thing, ask
 it by faith of the father of lightes, from whom
 alone commeth downe euery good gift, as well
 spirituall as corporall, and thou shalt obtain it.
 Thou desirest a garment to couer thee: there
 is extant throught Gods benefite the craft of
 dressing of skinnes, the arte of weauing of lin-
 nen and wollen: God will moue the hartes of
 the

Of Gods

the rich to bestowe vpon the some parte of their store: or els he will prouide for the by some other meane. He hath a thousand waies to giue whatsoeuer he knoweth to be necessary for vs, which to rehearse lyeth not in our power to do. Let this suffice the, and take it for a certaintie, he that did shew estesones to our first parents a way how to make garmets he y for so many ages conereth all kinde of creatures. some with feathers, some with haire, some w wool, some with scales, some with leather: he that adozneth the lillies and the gras of the felde, and that no lesse gorgeously then rich *Salomon* was arayed: he that kept the garments of the *Israelites* wandring in the wilderness by the space of forty yeres, from wearing: the same will giue vnto the also, wherewith to couer thy naked and colde carcasse.

Thou wouldest haue something giuen thee wherewith to slake thine hunger: he that gaue man authoritie ouer al his creatures, to vse the with thanksgiuing: he that ordayned a waye and meane of tylling the earth for the gathering in of the frutes: he that prouided for *Abraham* and *Iacob* during the time of famine in *Egypt*: he that rayned downe *Manna* and delicate flesh in y desert for the *Israelites*: he that gaue *Ruth* fauour in the eyes of *Booz*, so that he lycensed

rented her to gather vp the scattered eares of
 coyne in his field: he that sent forth the *Zeba* the
 seruant of *Mephiboseth* with Asses laden with
 bread, grapes and figges vnto *David* wearied
 with his traine in the wilderness, when he fled
 from *Abfolon*: he that stirred vp the hart of *Ab*
aias, to feed an hundred Prophets with bread
 and water, that lay hidde for the tyrannye of
Iezabel: he that boughsed to minister bread
 and flesh both euening and morning to *Elias* by
 Ravens: he that to feed the same *Elias* againe
 after ward, did wonderfully encrease the meale
 and oyle of the poore widowe of Sarepta: and
 the thirde time ministered to the selfe-same *Elias*
 whilest he fled, fine Cakes and a pot of water
 by an angell: he that nourished *Jeremy* in the
 pitte: he that at one time with fure, at an o-
 ther time with seauen loaves refreshed cer-
 taine thousandes of people, and gaue in charge
 that the scraps should be gathered vp, which
 many baskets were scarce able to holde: he of
 so many meanes why may he not succour thee
 also by some one or other? Thou art tormen-
 ted with thirst: he that shewed *Agar* flying in
 the wilderness a pitte of water: he that by his
 goodnes in fauour of the *Israhelites* made the bit-
 ter waters potable vnto them: he that out of
 a hard rocke brought the sweet and pleasaunt

Of Gods

the rich to bestowe vpon thee some parte of their store: or els he will prouide for thee by some other meane. He hath a thousand waies to giue whatsoever he knoweth to be necessary for vs, which to rehearse lyeth not in our power to do. Let this suffice thee, and take it for a certaintie, he that did shew esteemes to our first parents a way how to make garments he y^e for so many ages couereth all kinde of creatures, some with feathers, some with haire, some wth wool, some with scales, some with leather: he that adorne the lillies and the grasse of the felde, and that no lesse gorgeously then rich *Salomon* was arrayed: he that kept the garments of the *Israelites* wandring in the wilderness by the space of forty yeres, from wearing: the same will giue vnto thee also, wherewith to couer thy naked and colde carcasse.

Thou wouldest haue something giuen thee wherewith to slake thine hunger: he that gaue man authoritie ouer al his creatures, to vse the with thanksgiuing: he that ordained a waye and meane of tylling the earth for the gathering in of the frutes: he that prouided for *Abraham* and *Iacob* during the time of famine in *Egypt*: he that rayned downe *Manna* and delicate flesh in y^e desert for the *Israelites*: he that gaue *Ruth* fauour in the eyes of *Booz*, so that he lycensed

rented her to gather vp the scattered eares of
 coyne in his field: he that sent forth the *Zeba* the
 seruant of *Mephiboseth* with Asses laden with
 bread, grapes and figges vnto *Dauid* wearied
 with his traine in the wilbernes, when he fled
 from *Absolon*: he that stirred by the hart of *Ab-*
ehas, to feed an hundred Prophets with bread
 and water, that lay hidde for the tyrannye of
Iezabel: he that vouchsafed to minister bread
 and flesh both euening and morning to *Ehas* by
Rauens: he that to feed the same *Ehas* againe
 after ward, did wonderfully encrease the meale
 and oyle of the poore widow of *Sarepta*: and
 the thirde time ministered to the selfe-same *Elias*
 whilest he fled, fine Cakes and a pot of water
 by an angell: he that nourished *Jeremy* in the
 pitte: he that at one time with fure, at an o-
 ther time with seauen loaves refreshed cer-
 taine thousandes of people, and gaue in charge
 that the scraps should be gathered vp, which
 many baskets were scarce able to holde: he of
 so many meanes why may he not succour thee
 also by some one or other? Thou art tormen-
 ted with thirst: he that shewed *Agar* flying in
 the wilbernes a pitte of water: he that by his
 goodnes in fauour of the *Israelites* made the bit-
 ter waters potable vnto them: he that out of
 a hard rocke brought the sweet and pleasaunt

D.

water

water-springes: he that opened vnto *Sampson* wearied with ouercomming of his enemies, a conduit out of the iawbone of an asse: he that watereth continually the whole dry and thirsty earth: he will in no wise suffer thee to dye for thirst. Thou hast no house or mansiō place: he that prouideth for the snail's their shelles: he that hath taught the Swallowes to make their nestes most cunninglye of the earth: he that hath giuen wit and discretion to Foxes and other beastes to prouide theselues dennes and caues: he that preserved the *Israelites* in their perigrination so many yeres from all hurt of heate and colde: he that stirred vp the minde of *Abraham* and of other holie Fathers to the exercise of hospitalitie: he will vndoubtedly prouide thee a place where thou mayest safely rest. These are the thinges which we stand most in need off in our common course of life, and with the which he that coueteth nothing beyond the lawes of nature touching a sober and moderate life, may content himselfe: after which sort also the Apostle spake full wel of himselfe and of all that professe *Christe*, 1. *Timoth. 6.* Godlines, saith he, is great riches, if a man be contented with that he hath. For we brought nothing into the world, and it is certain that we can cary nothing out. Therefore hauing
foode

foode and rayment, let vs therewith be content. Now these thinges will God haue vs to looke for from him, and we finde by experience, that howsoeuer we bestow al our labours and trauailes about them, yet we attaine not vnto them but by his liberalitie. True it is indeede, that these thinges are bestowed vpon some moze plētifully, and vpon other moze sparingly: but it cannot be denied, that there is giuen vnto all so much, as is sufficient for the naturall sustentation of life. But if thou seest moze giuen to one then to another, yet thou oughtest to think, that there is nothing done without certaine aduice and iust causes.

Thou maruellest perhaps why he hath not giuen vnto thee great riches. But beholde how wisely the prouidence of God dealeth with thee. Thy pouertie keepeth thee in an humble and thristy estate of life, & so thou art brought to embrace other vertues also, which spring out of these: whereas otherwise, if thou flowdest in riches after thy desire, then becomming dissolute through immoderate superfluitie, thou wouldest apply thy minde to all manner of vices, and which is yet moze græuous, thou wouldest drawe others also together with thy selfe into shamefull ruine and destruction. Thy pouerty is the cause, why thou imployest thy
P:y, study

study in learning and supernaturall philosophy, which otherwise thou shouldest neuer, I beleue, haue talked so much as a far off. Thy pouerty causeth thee to behaue thy self modestly towards all men, and diligently to embrace frendship and peace: who if thou couldest challenge to thy selfe but so much as the name or title of a rich man, thou wouldest become græuous and intollerable to all. Further he that would haue thee to be poore, the same prouideth in the meane time, that nothing shall be wanting vnto thee, I say, for thy necessarye preservation. He moueth others, for the vertues which they perceiue in thee, to fauor thee, and to euenueer to doe thee good. Pea and thy wife and Children (if thou hast any) by reason of thy pouertie, become moze stronge and lusty, and are stirred vp to diligence in doing of their duties and following of their labours, which otherwise thou wert like to haue slothfull and inthyftie, and rather burdensome vnto thee then profitable. Besides what a benefite is this, that pouertie exempteth thee from many great & græuous annoyances, the which rich men, will they nill they, are inforced to goe vnder: and how great they are, no man can easily tell, but he that hath had experience of them. But it shall be good, for thee
 to

to weigh more exactly the spirituall benefites also, which doe come vnto thee by thy penury. It giueth thee occasion continuallye to call vpon the Lord, whilst thou requirest of him thinges necessary for thee, and knowest them to be looked for from him alone.

It causeth thee from time to time to commend thy selfe and all thine to him onelye, and willinglye to depend vpon him alone. It maketh thee to become resolute, so as the word of God which thou hast heard is not choked, through the thorny cares of richesse and beluptionnes in the felde of thine hart. It taketh away also the nourishment of such temptations as the deuill is wont to stirre vp in the rich men of this worlde. It ministreth a manifolde excuse of pacience. It encreaseeth and strengtheneth thy faith. It prouoketh thee to the contempt of pride, ambition, vaine glory, and of all earthly thinges, and perswadeth thee to meditate and aspire onelye after heauenlye thinges. Finally for many causes it is better for thee, when thou art in this sorte poore and needye, then if thou hadst plentye and abundance of all thinges.

It would be ouer long to rehearse all the causes that might be reckoned.

Thou vnderstandest therefore that it was or

P.ij.

denied

dey ned by the singuler wilsdome of God, and
foz thy incomparable benefit, that thou shouldest
liue contented with this thy poore estate
and condition. Contrariwise thou maruellest
again, why God would haue this thy neigh-
bour or any other man to be rich. But to omit
this, that no man can search out the causes of
Gods will in these things: yet wil I demaund
of thee, how thou canst tell, whether the great
riches wherewith thou seest him to be adorned,
will be beneficiall vnto him, or rather perniti-
ous. Either of them doubtleffe may come to
passe indifferently, but yet this last farre more
commonly then the other. For where one per-
aduerture among many that are endued with
riches of God may be sene, that vnderstan-
deth them to be as a certaine instrument of
well doing, y^e namely he might be stirred vp by
them to thankesgiuing, that he might perceiue
himself to be rather a steward ouer the then a
Lord, and impart them to his needy brethren,
feede the hungry, clothe the naked, comfort the
sick, succour the captiue, aide ministers of the
word, and to be short laye them out to Gods
gloze and the help of his neighbour: yet maiest
thou see againe very many on the other side,
vnto whom it appereth plenty of riches to be
giuen, that beeing vnthankfull foz their bene-
fites

stes receiued, are despised of God, and being
 despised are by little and little blinded, and be-
 ing blinded doe abuse the benefites graunted
 them for a time, and abusing them purchase to
 them-selues eternall damnation. Of these
 thinges we haue most manifest experimentes
 and examles in the holye Scriptures. More
Lazarus is commended, the more Apostles are
 praised, and they also that contemptuouslye
 reiected their riches not to be contended: which
 all seemed so much the more redy to take their
 passage into heauen, by how much the lesse
 they were hindzed with the sardels of earthly
 thinges. We read also of certaine rich Patri-
 arches, Iudges, Kings and other holy fathers:
 but these in the middelt of so great riches con-
 tinued notwithstanding more in spirit, and so
 vsed thinges present, as they would not great-
 ly haue cared if they had bene absent. Where-
 fo it belongeth that *Iacob* going into Mesopo-
 tamia, praised vnto God, y he would giue him
 especiall ye bread to eate, and rayment to put
 on: *Genes. 28.* Godly *Iacob* was not carefull for
 any more benefites: and the Lord (we see) gaue
 vnto him euen more then he desired. Likewise
Abraham is repozted to be rich, but yet so as
 he neuer bought ground, nor builded house.
 But we reade of other rich men, who through

their great riches were brought to extreame destruction: of which sort was that rich glutton clothed in fine linnen and purple, and faring deliciously euery daye: and an other who heareth, that after his cofers and barnes were fraughted to y^e full, his soule should immediately be taken from him: likewise the yong man which had rather forsake Christe then his riches, for whose cause also Christ took occasion to treat of the infelicitie or pouertie of rich men, and amongst other thinges said. That it is easier for a Camell to goe through the eye of a needle, then for a rich man to enter into the kingdome of heauen: and other mo also, whose names the Holy-ghoast voucheth not safe to mention in his sacred bookes. And such are alwaies the greatest number of rich men, and this our age hath (alas) too many routes of such as these.

Wherefore by these thou oughtest to iudge, that it is neither hurtfull to thee, that the diuine prouidence hath appointed thee to be poore: neither againe that it would be greatlie to thy profit, if it should euen now commaund thee to be rich. True indeed is that saying of the wise man, that as well riches as pouertie come from the Lord: but we may say that this also is most true, namely that it commeth likewise from
the

the Lord, that a man vse them well and as he ought. And no man euer bseth them well and as he ought to do, but he whose minde respecteth the will of God, submitteth him self therunto, and resteth in the determination of the diuine prouidence. And sith in the common course of our life it is a great safegard and help to the appeasing of the grāses and verations of the minde, to be able, as *Paule* speaketh of himself. *Philipp. 4.* to be content with the estate wherein we are, to be able for the time to be abased and to excell, to be able for the time to be full and to be hungrye, to abound and to suffer want: this also is a most sure and certain consolation, euen to waite vpon the Lord at all times by faith, for the thinges that he hath decreed to be requisite and necessary for vs. And hitherto belongeth that notable Sermon of *Christ*. *Matth. 6. Luke. 12.* Be not carefull saith he, for your life, what ye shall eate, or what ye shall drinke: nor yet for your bodye, what ye shall put on. He addeth immediatlye an euident reason touching the prouidence of God, which is perceiued in the creation of man: Is not the life, saith he, more woorth then meate, and the body more woorth then raiment? as though he should say: He that hath created and yet still preferueth both thy soule and body, the same

same doubtlesse will prouide also these lesser thinges, I meane foode and rayment. There is added also another reason, where an argumēt is drawn from the lesse to the greater. Behode the foules of the aier, for they sowe not, neither reape, nor carry into the barnes: yet your heauenly Father feedeth them. Are yee not much better then they? Where are touched many comfortable reasons. You are much better the the foules: there is no doubt therefore but he will much lesse forsake you then them. Further he prouideth for the birdes that take no paines at all: how much moze will he prouide for you that labour lustely in your callings for whom is prepared the vse of second causes? Again, he is your Father: wherfore you ought to make this certain accompt, that he is endued with a fatherlye affection toward you, and that the same heuenly Father, will omit none of those thinges, which we see to be perfourmed and accomplished by earthlye parentes. And least any man should perswade himselfe, that he could with his own labours prouide thinges necessarye for his life, Chyriste by an exquisite preuention putteth the matter out of doubt, saying: Which of you by taking careful thoght, can adde one cubite to his stature? that is to say, Albeit ye bend all the force of your witte,
and

and exercise all maner of artes and sciences, yet shall yee not be able to bring the least thing to passe, if ye be not holpen hy the diuine aid, and if the Lord giue ye not increase. *For thus in Luke* it is expressely added: If ye then be not able to doo the leaste thing, why take yee thought for the remnant? *There followeth a more full exposition:* And why care ye for raiment? Consider the Lillies of the feeld, how they grow: they labour not, neither doo they spinne. Yet I saye vnto you, that euen *Solomon* in all his glory was not arayed like vnto these.

Our labour & wisdome are able to doo nothing, no more then the Lillies are saide to doo any thing of themselves, while they grow: but the Lord procureth all things as well in vs as he dooth in the plants & other creatures, which are vtterly boide of reason and industrie. And he amplifieth exceedinglye the greatnes of the benefites which we are to looke for from God, and willeth vs to be of a confident minde, whilist he saith that the native beauty of Lillies is greater, then that which art (though otherwise a resembler of nature) can euer be able to expresse: yea then that was of *Solomon* himselfe, whose sumptuous apparell notwithstanding did easely surmount the glozy of all other princes, as the Scripture dooth witnesse.

Wherefore

Wherefore we must also look constantly for things necessary for this life from God, seeing he giueth those things largely to Lillies that are not necessary, but serue in a manner for no other purpose the for beauty onely. If so be the he giueth more then needs to the vayne Lillies, which stand not in need of any such beauty, neither are they greatly benefited by it: why will he not much more giue vnto men the things which this life cannot want, & with the which it is so necessary that men should be helpen, that without them they cannot but perish?

And againe he confirmeth this matter with an other reason from the lesser to the greater: Wherefore if God so cloth the grasse of the field which is to day, and to morowe is cast into the furnace: shal he not do it much more vnto you, o yee of little faith? In which comparison he extenuateth the nature and condition of grasse, that the vilenes therof being considered, our mindes may conceiue hope, that God will far more willingly & carefully regard our affaires, sith we be farre more excellent creatures, then are the senselesse grasse. But it hath the force of a rebuke, in that he calleth them that are so carefull for y things of this life, holigopistous, that is, of little faith. For the sense is this: If you were endued with true faith, such as became them

them to haue that are called into the fellowship of Christ, ye would not dout of the goodnes of God: but would determine with a stedfast faith that God would liberally prouide for you. And this is it & he meaneth in the words following Therefore take no thought, saying: what shall we eate, or what shall we drinke, or wherewith shall we be clothed? for after all these things doo the Gentiles seeke. Beholde a vehement behoort for our dissuatory reason. It is the propertie of the Gentiles saith he, which are without God, without hope, without faith, *Eph. 2.* to be carefull for earthly thinges: and all because they being not as yet renewed nor as yet adorned with the Holy-ghost, are giuen onely to earthly thinges, and cannot comprehend things spirituall. Wherefore if thou wilt not be counted such a one, look back vnto better thinges, that is to say, to heauenly, learne to depend altogether vpon God alone, and to commit thy selfe wholly to his providence. Whereupon followeth an other reason drawn from the providence and knowledge of God. Your heauenly Father, saith he, knoweth that ye haue need of al these things. If he knoweth it, then in vaine dost thou consume thy self with so many cares: and as he knoweth what thou wantest, so knoweth he how to prouide for thee. Againe if he be thy Father, see thou behaue

behaue thy self towarb him as a sonne, looking
for all thinges at his hand: and thou maist be
sure, he will not suffer thee to pine away for
want of help. But rather seeke yee first the king-
dome of heauen, and the righteousnes therof,
and all these thinges shalbe ministred vnto you.
Mans reason doth all things after a preposse-
rous manner: in the first place it looketh after
earthly thinges, it willeth men to lay for tem-
porall commodities, and then secondly it thin-
keth of vertue, as full well expelleth the
Satyrist:

*O Citizens o Citizens,
first Coyne must come in place:
And after money once obtaind,
then vertue next embrace.*

But Christ clean contrarywise: first, saith
he seek the kingdome of God and his righte out-
nes. And in trueth so it is: he that in this order
doth first regard the matters of his soule, the
same obtaineth whatsoeuer is necessary to the
nourishing of his body: according to that saying
of the Psalmist, *Psal. 33.* Beholde the eye of the
Lord is vpon them that feare him, and vpon the
that trust in his mercye: to deliuer their soules
from death, and to preferue them in famine.
Again *Psal. 34:* Feare the Lord, ye his Saintes,
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for nothing wanteth to thē that feare him. The Lions do lack and suffer hunger: but they which seek the Lord, shall want nothing that is good. *Psal, 37.* The pathes of man are directed by the Lord, and he maketh his way acceptable to him selfe. Though he fal, he shall not be cast off, for the Lord putteth vnder his hand. I haue beene yong and now am olde: yet saw I neuer the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread. **Christ therfore concludeth very exactly,** saying Care not then for to morow: for to morow shal care for it selfe: as though he should say, God as he prouideth for thee to day, so will he prouide for thee also to morow, & the dayes following. **Whither also it belongeth that Christ in the prayer which he prescribeth vnto vs al,** taught vs to aske, our daylye bread to be giuen vs this daye. **For in dæde we cannot iustlye require bread to be giuen vs any longer,** then we are sure to line. **If we be vncertaine of life,** why would we be certaine of liuing? **Therfore let vs from him alone look for liuing,** yea & what soeuer els is necessary for our daylye vse, from whom we looke for life. **Hitherto the bꝛæf and short,** if we looke vpon the wordes only: but if we regarde the doctrine, the long and rich sermon of Christ, which all our life long ought to be pꝛesired befoꝛe our eyes and mindes, and to admonish

admonish vs of the goodnes and prouidence of God, ministring all necessary things vnto vs.

Howbeit God by his prouidence minnstreth, not these things onely which are required to the dayly vse of life: but also all other kinde of helpes and comforts, which according to the vnusuall & vnlooked for successe of our affaires (as indeed the change and alteration of mens matters is meruelous) may any way be desired. There cannot so many troubles and aduersities at any time creep vpo vs vnbelwares, but that it is in the Lords hand and wil, to afford vs many mo and moze effectuell remedies to the recouering of our health & safetie. Where falleth out some dangerous controuersie with one or other wherein thou hast need of present resolution, occasion is sought & wiles are wrought to inferre open violence, many sworn enemies doe flock together against thee, thou art set in y middelt of swordes & speares in all these things the Lord him self for his part worketh somewhat, and ceaseth not to haue a care of thee. Thou art to comence sute in lawe, thou art destitute of faithfull aduocates: thou art bered in thy minde by reason of the suspected iniquitie of the iudge, y power of thine aduersaries and other causes: iudgement is very hardly pronounced against thee,
neither

neither is there any place giuen for delaye or
 appeale: thy goddes are immediatly seized by
 on, and thine aduersaries are intituled vnto
 them: perhaps thou art cast into prison, tor-
 ments are deuised and vsed against thee: by
 thine owne confession wretched from thee by vi-
 olence thou art brought to be infamous, thou
 art driuen into bondage, or els by some other
 meanes thy body is afflicted, thy life also stan-
 deth in hazard. Lastly thou art so delt withal
 as it were much better for thee to dye, then to
 liue any longer. Besides this thou art sent
 into exile, and thou must with sorrow and he-
 uines wander through vnknown cuntries,
 where thou knowest no body, of whome thou
 maist hope either for comfortable word or for
 any other succour. Sometimes also thou art
 to make thy passage by water, which when
 it happeneth thou art more in danger then be-
 fore. Yet being escaped and bearing a few
 thinges about thee, thou goest to such a place,
 as where there ariseth open warre, and so all
 thinges againe become most wofull and des-
 perate vnto thee. After warres thou art en-
 tertained by a publike famine, no lesse fearfull
 then the former, by meanes wherof thou canst
 hardly get any thing wherwith to buy bread,
 to ease thy gnawing and hungrye stomacke

D.

Withall.

withal. Immediately after this rageth the pestilence: and her thou must either provide for thy self by flying away afresh, or else thou must oppose thy selfe to most certaine death and destruction. Being deliuered from the infection of the plague, thou fallest into an other disease, no lesse greuous, wherewith thou art long and much tormented, and the same wipeeth thee quite and cleane of all that thou hast. If any thing be yet left, at length a fire flaming vpon the sodaine deuoureth in a manner both thee and thy whole house. There are besides very many kindes of dangers dayly and continually happening, which are by no means able to number. But certes against all these matters the minde shall singularly well be fenced, that will diligentlly looke into those thinges, that haue of vs bene taught touching Gods prouidence. And howsoeuer euerye of them might affoord plentifull matter of consolation, which thing, but for the time, we would easilys ap-
proue: yet notwithstanding this will especial-
ly auaille to that purpose, if we shew that euen
all crosses also and calamities are wiselie and
for some profitable considerations sent of God:
secondly that as he hath sent them, so by him
they must al againe be taken away, when and
as ofte as he shall see good and expedient. Of
this

this thing therfore we will now speak.

It easeth indeed somewhat the greatnes of the pains, in that the afflicted persons are perswaded, to hope for deliuerance at all times out of their distresses from God: but I wote not how it cometh to passe, their patience is very little helpen by this meanes at that very time, wherein their paines doe still disquiet them. For inasmuch as hope respecteth things to come, and of these there remaineth alwaies some doubtfulness, at the least this can neuer fullye be plucked away: the minde cannot by reason of the greatnes of the calamities present, so look into the commodities absent, but that the assaultes of impatience will oftentimes returne a fresh, and by little and little waying strong, will at the length preuaile, in such wise that he which is distressed with anguish, shall suppose himselfe to be utterly neglected of God, and againe he also for his part shall neglect all duety vnto God. To the which poynte when a man is once come, what hope can he haue any more? Least any man therfore should fall into this extreme miserie of all miseries, it shalbe very requisite for him to knowe, that euen troubles and afflictions also are sent of God himselfe, & that as well for just causes and considerations, as also for our

D.y.

health

health and preservation rather then for our destruction. Which knowledge, is in very good & fountaine and wellspring of al consolation. For why, except & minde of euery distressed person be perswaded, and that thoroughly, that it is so: there will scarce apper any way of recovering either patience or comfort. There is no doubt, but the holy Fathers, as oft as they seeing the vngodly wel dealt withall, and themselves to haue ill successe in all thinges, suspected that they were forsaken of God (for there are in the holy Scriptures such complaints extant) did against these temptations fortifie and confirm themselves against distrustfulnes with this doctrine of Gods prouidence. Wherefore the same also ought to be common vnto vs, and in the like troubles we must gather from thence the like comforts and consolations.

1 To declare therfore, that euen the crosses and calamities which do encomber vs are sent of God, those things especially are very auailable, that haue ben discoursed against Fate, Fortune, Chaunce, Contingence or Vapazard. For seeing it is plaine and euident that nothing at al cometh to passe by the meanes of these, and yet we thinke that calamities otherwise are deriued especiallve from these: certainlve it is expedient, that we referre all things

things that befall vs, both generally and particularly, whither they be good or euill, to the prouidence of God, and to acknowledge all things to be ordered and disposed by God himselfe. And this reason doth straightwaies so teach and enforme mens mindes, that they can by no meanes be perswaded, that they shall euer be neglected of God, but y they are gouerned by his most wise counsell alone, and in no case or affaires to depend vpon the becke and assignement of vnappealeable fate or Destinie, or foolish and blinde fortune, or vnauided Contingence or Hapazard.

2 But if in case the prouidence of God be so busily occupied in all things, and that euen in the least and most vile, as we haue in a cler discourse proued before, when we intreated of peculiar prouidence: doubtlesse we cannot without great iniury withdraue the aduersities which we see dayly beyond our expectation to arise, from the power and iurisdiction of the diuine administration. For inasmuch as he hath a special care of al and singular things, neither is any creature able to do any thing without his will and ordinance: certes whatsoeuer commeth any where to passe, whither it be by men, or by the egger vnto all euill the Deuill, yet is it without all controuersie,

Diij.

that

that it falleth out by his appointment and commaundement.

3 Moreover, who is he that would wike the praise of wisdom and iustice to be taken from God: But vndoubtedly as well Gods wisdom as iustice doe especially shine even in these calamities, which we mortall and miserable creatures doe suffer here belowe: wherefore even these also shall not without cause be iudged to proceed from God. Yea and it is so necessary to attribute these things to God, as it is necessarye to determine him to be verilye most wise and indeed most iust. And sozomuch as of the evils which we see to come to passe, nothing cometh to passe in vaine, or without cause, truelye we must referre the very same to the wisdom of God y ordereth all things, perswading our selves that the endes and causes of calamities are prefixed and appointed by the selfesame wisdom. Again, seeing it is iust to punish the guilty, and to inflict paines vnto those that deserue them, and that no discomforties doe arise, but we by our sinnes haue iustly deserued greater: it is not absurd, if we ascribe our calamities vnto God, as iustly punishing vs for our offences. And like as we neuer at any time faile to commit sinnes, so there is no cause why we should challengege
to

to our selues this prerogatiue, that we ought at any time to be free from dangers. God is euer moze iust, and thou art euer moze a sinner: woorthily therefore art thou punished by God at all times, though the ministerie of what soeuer creatures it please him to procede against thee.

4 But sith mozeouer from the euils wherewith we are distressed, God taketh occasion to illustrate and set forth his gloze and power, (which is then verily done, when both he wonderfully and besides their expectation deliuereth the godly out of trouble, and on the other side ouerthroweth their aduersaries, which seemed before vnconquerable) why should we not graunt, that our miseries, of what sorte soeuer they be, are tempered and qualified by him, whereof this is the appointed end, that his goodness, power and gloze may be made the moze famous thereby, and be spread farre and nye?

5 The thinges out of which many benefites doe come vnto vs, and chiefly spirituall, there is no man but iudgeth it meet, that we reduce them vnto God the bottomlesse fountain of all goodness. But aduersities, and those that in the opinion of carnall men are counted euils, doe oftentimes bring great aduantages to the god,

ly, and God is wont so to dispense them, that they alwaies serue to some commoditie: wherefore it is to be holden for a certainty, that they are sent of God himselfe to a good end.

And in all these thinges the force of the diuine prouidence doth wonderfully aduance it selfe, and in the meane time all things farre aboute all that can be saide, are full of comfort and consolation. For they serue to the intent we may vnderstand, that whatsoeuer calamities are sent, and how or by what meanes soeuer, and whither of the deuill or of men, or of any other creature, yet that they proceede from the iust and good pleasure of God: and that also we should beare them so much & more patientlie, whilst they are present, by how much we know a more certaine vtilitie to be reaped by them, and further also help and succour by the selfesame God to be prouided for vs.

And albeit all these thinges be plaine and manifest inough, especiallie for because many particulars from whence these do flowe, haue of vs bene declared already: yet to the intent a more plentifull furniture of consolations may be had in a readines, and may the more deepe-ly be imprinzed in the mindes of all, we will approue and confirme the same by certain places

ces of Scripture, which that it wil be good for vs to call to remembrance, as ofte as aduersities shall lye heauy vpon vs, the very vse and experience of thinges, I am surz, will declare.

¶ As touching the two former reasons, wherby it was saide, that nothing is done by fate, fortune, Chaunce, or Contingence: likewise, that the prouidence of God is particular, and occupied in every thing: it is not needful that we repeate the arguments already produced and alloadged. It shall suffice vs to shew in generall, that the euills (which in our iudgement I meane are thought to be such), are in the scriptures attributed to God, and that it cometh to passe by his wise & good ordinance: that wee are oftentimes afflicted with calamities. For thus we finde it in *Esay* chap. 45. I am the Lord, and ther is none other: I forme the light and create darknes: I make peace and create euill: I the Lord doo all these thinges. And *Jeremy*. 21. I haue set my face against this Cittie, for euill and not for good, saith the Lord: it shalbe giuen into the hand of the King of *Babel*, and he shalburne it with fire. The like we haue *Jerem*. 39. And the same prophet in his Lamentationschap. 3. Who is he the that saith, and it cometh to passe, and the Lord commaundeth

commandeth it not? Therefore out of the mouth of the most high proceedeth there not euil and good? *Amos. 3.* Shall there be euil in a Citie, and the Lord hath not doone it? *Iob. 2.* Shall we receiue good at the hand of God, and not receiue euil? And a little befoze: The Lord hath giuen, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord.

Further that the Lord doth vse one while the deuill, an other while man, another while other creatures, in bringing calamities vpon mankind, as his instruments, he shal easily perceiue, that hath but meanely tasted the holy scriptures. Concerning þe deuill it is manifest out of the notozious historie of *Iob*: as chap. 1. where the Lord saith vnto the Deuill: Lo, all that he hath is in thy power, onely vpon himselfe shalt thou not stretch out thine hand. And chap. 2. Sathan departed from the presence of the Lord, and smot *Iob* with sore boyles, from the sole of his foote to the crowne of his head. *Iudg. 9.* God sent an euill spirit (vntoubtedlye the deuill the disturber of peace) between *Abimelech* and betwene the men of *Sichem*; and the men of *Sichem* dispised *Abimelech*. 1. *Samuell. 16* an euill spirit sent of the Lord vexed *Saule*. 1. *King. 22.* The Lord said, Who shall intise *Achab*, that he may goe vp and fall at *Ramoth Gilead*?

lead? When when a certaine spirit had offered him selfe, saying, that he would be a lying spirit in the mouth of his prophets, he heareth of the Lord: Thou shalt entise him, and shalt also preuaile: goe forth, and doo so. And it is added: Now therfore behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath appointed euil against thee. Neither doth God vse onely euil Angels to inflict punishments vpon men, but also good and elect: seing al indifferently are ministring spirits ordeigned to execute his diuine commaundements. So *Exod. 12.* that night wherein the *Israelites* did eate the *Passouer*, by the god Angell of the Lord were slaine the first begotten of the *Egyptians*. *2. Sam. 14.* by the Angell of the Lord hauing a naked sword were destroyed certain thousands of men, after that *Dauid* had sinned in commanding his people to be numbred. *2. King. 19.* one Angel in his hoast of *Sennacherib* slew a hundred foure score and five thousand men. *Act. 12.* of the Angel of the Lord: wicked *Herod* was sodenly stricken.

Now that the Lord vseth in like maner the service and ministry of men, it is not obscure. In the prophets the *Babylonians*, *Assirians*, and others are atentimes described and expressely called the instruments, by the which the Lord will

will punish his disobedient people. *Esa. 10. As-*
sir is called the rod of Gods wrath, and staffe
of his displeasure. And it is added: I will send
him to a dissembling natiō, and I wil giue him a
charge against the people of my wrath, to take
the spoile, and to catch the praye, and to treade
them vnder feete like the mire in the street. But
he thinketh not so, neither doth his hart esteem
it so: but he imagineth to destroy and cut of not
a few nations. In which place that is woꝛth
our marking by the way, namelpe where it is
expressely signified, that the Lord sendeth e-
uils to one end, and men inferre them to an o-
ther end: and that he soꝛowth in the same woꝛk
exerciseth the office of iustice, and these of
wrath, pride, inordinate lust, and thereby it
commeth to passe, that vnto these sinne is im-
puted, and vnto him redoundeth no small praise
and commendation.

Againe *Esa. 13.* They come from a farre
cuntry, from the end of the heauen: euen the
Lord commeth with the weapons of his wrath,
to destroy the whole land. Lo the Lord and his
weapons, that is to say, the instruments of his
wrath. Also in the same place: Beholde I will
stir vp the *Medes* against them, which shall not
regarde siluer, nor be desirous of golde, &c. *Je-*
re. 22. God saith that he prepareth destroy-

ers: And I wil prepare destroyers against thee,
 euery one with his weapons, and they shall cut
 down thy cheefe Cedar trees, and cast the in the
 fire. And many nations shal passe by this Citie,
 and they shall saye euery one to his neighbour:
 Wherefore hath the Lord doon thus to this great
 citie? We haue the like almost *Ierem. 25.* But
 in *Ierem. 27.* the Lord calleth the tirant *Nabu-*
chadnezer his seruant: Wherefore now I haue
 giuen all these landes into the hand of *Nabu-*
chadnezer King of *Babel*, my seruant, &c. and
 all nations shal serue him, and his sonne, and his
 sonnes sonne, vntill the very time of his land
 come also, &c. *Ezechiell. 17.* He calleth the *Ba-*
ylonians his net and dragge. I will spread saith
 he, my nette vpon him, and he shal be taken in
 my dragge or great net, and I will bring him to
Babel, and will enter into iudgement with him
 there for his treipas, &c. To the like effect there
 is more chap. 26. And oftentimes shal we meet
 with such things in the prophets, so y it is not
 needful to reapeate any more. But as we haue
 saide of Angels, so is it requisite also that we
 vnderstand it of men, namely that not onelye
 euill men, but good also are the instruments of
 the Lord working whatsoeuer it pleaseth him.
 For so hath the Lord very often by good and
 holy Iudges, Kings, and other subdued wicked
 people

people and kingdomes, yea and sometimes vterly ouerthrow them.

Of Angels and men we haue spoken: it remaineth that we adde some thinges touching other creatures. By fire, and that falling down from heauen from the Lord, as the Scripture speaketh, five Cities were consumed, *Genes. 19*. A fire by the will of the Lord running along the face of the earth destroyed fourtane thousand and seauen hundred seditious persons: *Numb. 16.* and not much before that time the sonnes of *Aaron*, *Nadab* and *Abihu*: *Leuit. 10.* Two Captaines either of them with fiftie Soldiers being sent by King *Abaziah* to *Elias* the prophet were deuoured wth fire: *2. King. 1.*

The waters of Egypt were turned into blood, and so became vnfit to be drunk, and pernicious to fishes: *Exod. 7.* A little after the waues of the red Sea swallowed vp an innumerable multitude, and euen King *Pharaoh* himselfe with all his hoste: *Exod. 14.* The earth opening deuoured *Korah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram* with their confederates, and their whole families: *Numb. 16.* The same now and then denyeth the fruites graciouslye gaped for, the Lord procuring the causes of barrennes either open or secret: as in the daies of *Achab* he restreyned the firmament and cloudes, that they

they should not raine vpon the earth: *King. 17.*

The aire oftentimes by the Lords commaundement is infected, and becommeth hurtfull not onely to the fowles and brute beastes drawing it in, but also to men prouoking pestilent and deadly diseases in them: as *1.Chron. 21.* We read that the Lord sent a plague among the *Israelites*, and that there died of the leauentie thousand men. And in the prophets we heare often of the wicked and vngodlye, how some were smitten with the pestilence, and other some threathned to be smitten. The haile, the rayne, ingendred in the aire, do procure dearth and scarcitie of vittayl, when and as oft as the Lord will haue it so. *Exod. 9.*

Next by brute beastes what great hurtcs and dangers are we subiect vnto: By ffrogs, fflies, Lice, and Locustes all *Egypt* was miserably vered: *Exod. 8 9. 10.* Many of the murmuring *Israelites* were stung of Serpents and died: *Numb. 21.* Two Beares stirred vp by the Lord tare in peces two and fortie Children for mocking and rayling vpon *Elisha. 2. King. 2.* Certaine people of the *Babylonians* being sent by King *Salmanazar* to inhabit in *Samarita* were destroyed by Lyons sent of God: *2. King. 17.* And the man of God sent to *Ieroboam*, is saide to be deliuered of the Lord to the Lyon

Lyon that slewe him: *1. King. 13.*

And what should I stand to rehearse any more: By diuers and sundry meanes dangers doe ensue: but we must confesse them all to be sent by the Lord himselfe, who dooth vse the creatures that he hath made freely and to what purposes it pleaseth him as instruments prepared to euery worke and busines whatsoeuer. Neither in very deed are al the creatures to be accounted any other then the toles and weapons of the chiefe workmanister God, and second causes. And God doubtlesse, as he is almighty and the worker of all in all, can out of those things, which are reputed of themselves to be good, and so are indeede, when he seeth canse raise by discommodities vnto vs: and againe on the other side, cause the thinges that are euill, and which we flie and abhor, to turne to our no small profit and comoditie. It appeereth therfore by these thinges, that euen all distresses and aduersities are sent of God himselfe.

Wherefore seeing it is in no wise lawfull to resist his will, and that we are to take in good part, whatsoeuer he ordeineth by his prouidence: we ought from hence to drawe some portion of comfort, in that we know assuredly that all perils and dangers come from God.

And

And so much to the two former reasons, wherby we haue proued that crosses and calamities are sent of God.

As touching the third reason, consider the sayings of the holy fathers, weigh the examples which propound vnto vs any that haue bene afflicted, whither of the godly or vngodly, and vndoubtedly thou shalt finde, that ther by doth redound vnto God the praise either of wisdome or iustice, or rather of both of them together. Touching the wisdome of God appearing in our aduersities, it is notably said of *Esay*. chap. 31. Woe vnto them that goe downe vnto *Egypt* for helpe, and staye vpon horses, and trust in Chariots because they are many, and in horsemen, because they be very strong: but they look not to the holy one of *Israell*, nor seek vnto the Lord. But he yet is wisest: therfore he will bring euill, and not turne back his woord: but he will rise against the house of the wicked, and against the help of the that woork vanitie. Where the prophet reproveth those that were ouermuch giuen and addicted to humane or carnall wisdome, and admonisheth them to look rather into Gods wisdome, who doth nothing without certaine aduise, and with like wisdome both sendeth and remoneth aduersities. For befoze the Lord doth afflict any man

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with

with calamities, he resolueth with himselfe, what great good will grow of it either to him that suffereth, or vnto others, and likewise how and when it is expedient to deliuer the afflicted, to the great admiration of all men. *Iob. 11.* Oh that God would speake, and open his lippes against thee? that he might shew thee the secrets of wisdom, how thou hast deserued double according to right: know therfore that God hath forgotten thee for thine iniquitie. Canst thou by searching finde out the secrets of God? or canst thou finde out the Almighty according to his perfection? They are the words of *Zophar the Namathite*, signifying that whē God most wisely ordereth all things, yea euen in sending of crosses also, yet we cannot attain the causes of his counsell. *Psal. 147.* Great is our Lord, and great is his power, and his wisdom is infinite. The Lord releeneth the meek, and abaseth the wicked to the ground. Beholde the wisdom of God in debasing and punishing the vngodly. *Ecclesiast. chap. 8.* the wise man doth greatly wonder at the wisdom of God in beholding the thinges that are done vpon earth, as touching the sundry euent and successe of men. But we shall better and more clarely beholde in some one example the order of the diuine wisdom. Doubtlesse the history
of

of the destruction of Egypt doth many wayes declare the force and power of Gods wisdoms. God would not at the first destroy them immediately after the contempt of his word, which yet he iustly might haue done: but it pleased him first to try them diuers and sundry waies, whither by scourges they might be softened and brought to the acknowledgement of his will: insomuch that as ofte as new signes were sent against the *Egyptians*, so ofte the Lord declared, that he earnestly sought their repentance and saluation. But in the meane while where in the middelt of the vniuersall ruines of all Egypt, the land of *Goshen*, which the *Israelites* did possesse, remained safe and sound, that verily auayled not a little to moue aswell the *Egyptians* as the *Israelites*: those I say, that they might acknowledge the will of God, and submit themselues vnto it: and these, that they might waite with an vnremoueable faith and pscience for a wonderfull deliuerance at Gods hand. And therfore also would the Lord haue *Pharaoh* to persist and continue so long in stubbornnes and unbelaxe, that he might so much the more iustly afterward destroy both him and all his. And in all these thinges the wisdoms of God doth wonderfully bewray it selfe. To say nothing that

these things were thus ordeined of the Lord, to the end posteritie might haue profitable examples both of the punishment of incredulitie and rebellion, and of the commendation of faith and obedience. It would be ouerlong to make mention of all other thinges, that doe extol the diuine wiscome of God in that history. And who is he that knoweth for a suretye the Lords purposes and determinations? Who is able to say, why or wherfore, when he could many other waies haue deliuered his people, yet he would this way especially bying it to passe? Certaine it is in the meane season, that nothing was done in all this busines without great and iust causes, but the nature of Gods wisdomie will moze fullye open and displaye it selfe, whilest other causes of afflictions also are sene into, and especiallye the commodities, wherof we will speake anon. And as we (by the waye) in this one example doe propound these workes of Gods wisdomie to be obserued, so will it be an easie matter for euery man to finde out the like in other examples. Wherfore it is manifest hereby, that the wisdomie of God shineth most clærelye in our afflictions and dangers, and therfore that the calamities also which are laide vpon vs, are rightly to be ascribed onely and alone to God
And

And from hence great comfort est sones arise. For we ought to be perswaded, that nothing can euer come ill to passe, or at least wise be void of fruite, that God by his incomparable wisdom hath ordeind to be down in and about our matters and affaires. And thus verily ought euery one, as ofte as sickness, trouble, captiuitie, or any other calamitie, either publike or priuat, doth come vpon vs, to say with himselfe: The Lord hath sent this miserie: But because he is wise, and euen wisdom it selfe, he doth it not without great and weighty causes: doubtlesse his rod and staffe will fall out to be a comfort vnto vs, and there will followe some fruite of hurtles, if not straight waies or in this life, yet after a while and in the life to come. Now that the iustice of God is declared in our miseries, it is better known then y it needeth to be proued any whit at large. Gods iustice is euery where commended in the holy Scriptures, and it is set before vs to be considered all our life long. Hitherto belong all the places that make mention of the feare of God. For therefore is God to be feared, because that according to his iustice he severely punisheth transgressors.

Like wise all the places wherein the Lord

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13

is described to exercise iudgement and iustice on the earth. Adde also all the threatninges which are most plentifully extant in the lawe and the prophets against the transgressors of the Diuine preceptes. Yea and so farresforth is this knowledge of Gods iustice necessarye, that vnlesse the same be diligentlly taught, men cannot. such is their pronenesse and headstrong boldenesse to sinne, be kept and retained within the compasse of their ducties. Nay without this knowledge God should not be knowen to be God, neither would any man stand in awe of his diuine maiestie. For this is the first honour and dignitie of the best and eternall God, and his chiefe and principall office, which also al men doe in the first place consider and call to minde, namely that he recompenceth good things to the good, and euil things to the bad: which is in very deed the true proprietic of iustice. And that this is so, not only the promises and curses set forth in the holye Scriptures by the commaundement of God doe abundantly teach, but also that common knowledge engraued in the mindes of all the Gentiles touching the rewards of the good and punishments of the wicked.

But now if any man will say, that it is true indeed, that Gods iustice doth notablly appere

appere in this, that the wicked are punished
for their sinnes : but yet that it seemeth in no
wise that God dealeth iustly then, when hee
suffereth the godly also to bee oppressed with
common calamities, whome hee ought with
good right (to mans iudgement) to keepe in sa-
fety vnder his protection by reason of the pre-
rogative of their election and excellēt holines :
this carnall and trifeling obiection shall easely
and with small adoe be answered.

First, this word Justice commeth to be
considered, not altogether alike in God, as it
is in men, that namely God should then only
be acknowledged to be iust, when after y^e rule
of mans iudgement, and according to y^e rigor
of the law (as they call it) hee requireth like
for like (for otherwise y^e praise of iustice should
neuer properly belong vnto God, sith he neuer
in such wise either giueth rewards or inflicteth
punishments, but that in these he recompen-
seth beneath measure and desert, and in those
aboue measure and desert) but God doth iust-
ly, as oft as he performeth that, wherein his
wisdome, godnes and power doe appere: inas-
much as there is no man but understandeth y^e
it is most iust, that these vertues (if at least it
be lawfull so to call them) should at all times
be made knownen and set forth. But certes in
the

the afflictions of the godly the wisdome, godnes and power of God do wonderfully declare and shewe forth them selves: wherefore there is no cause why wee should think that the godly are vniustly punished. Neither verily can wisdome or godnes as they are discearned in God, be separated from iustice, for they sticke fast together and helpe one an other, and can neuer be seuered in tyme or duties. For why? God doth at all times worke wisely, mightily, wel and iustly: and whatsoeuer is done wisely, mightily or well, the same also must bee done iustly: and so on the contrary.

Secondly. how canst thou say that the godly are wrongfully punished, when there is no man endued with such a singular sanctimonie, but that, if wee beleaue the Scripture (as doubtlesse wee must beleaue it) hee doth not only fall once but also seuen nay infinit times in a day, yea and now & then also hee comitteth moste greuous enormities at least wise in minde and will (which onely and alone maketh men guilty before God, and is reputed and taken for the deed done) further there is no sinne so light & worthy of pardon to mans thinking, which yet were not to be recompenced with most horrible and eternall paines, if so be God would straightly examine euery thing, and list it after

ter the rule of his most seuerer iudgement. For we are all by nature the children of wrath: *Ephes. 2.* All haue sinned and are destitute of the glory of God: *Rom. 3.* And *Psal. 130.* If thou Lord wilt marke our iniquities, who shall be able to stand? Howsoever therfore it falleth out vnto those that are accounted in the number of the godly, it behoueth them certes to be perswaded, yea euen whilest they are distressed with strange and innumerable perplexities, that they are yet louinglye and fauourablye delt withall. The Lord euen the when he stricketh is pittifull, and forgetteth not his mercy.

Thirdly: If in case thou hast experience dayly of the Lordes liberalitie, why shouldest thou not sometimes also sale his rodde? This thing no man will iudge to be vnequall, which at least would not incurre the reprocche of ingratitude, or take vpon him to controule Gods iustice. So *Iob* willingly confessed, that he was iustly afflicted with miseries and stricken of the Lord, who before had had the vse of most large and ample benefites. Shall we receiue good at the hand of God, saith he, and not receiue euill?

Fourthly: What shal we say to this: that it is meet and conuenient that parents should sometimes correct their Sonnes, whome they would

would haue to become god men. And except they doe this, they shalbe thought to haue small care or regarde of their childzens welfare. After the same maner God also, the common Father of vs all, dooth most iustlye, in that he euer and anon somewhat seuerelye chastiseth the godly, whom he accounteth undoubtedly as his owne Children, least they should by ouermuch cockering become careless and secure, and being corrupted through long prosperitie fall to sinning, with the wicked, who haue all thinges for the most parte according to their desire. Witherto belong that saying of the wise man *Pro. 3.* Whom the Lord loueth, him he chasteneth. *Apoca. 3.* Whomsoever I loue, I rebuke and chasten.

Fiftly: Why shouldst thou think much to be afflicted here for a while, if after thou be gone from hence, thou knowest assuredly that eternall life is prepared for thee, and that thou shalt be blessed with ioyes euermlasting? Nay it is iust and to be wished, that thou shouldst suffer here and be molested, that thou mightest hereafter enjoy perpetuall rest and felicitie. For why it cannot be, that all thinges should fall out alike, after thy desire both here and there. For God hath so ordained. *2. Thes. 1.* It is a righteous thing with God to render vnto you

you that are troubled rest with vs, when the Lord Iesus shall shewe him selfe from heauen. And *Luk. 16. Abraham* saith to the rich man: Sonne, remember that thou in thy life time receiuedst thy pleasures, and likewise *Lazarus* paines: but now is he comforted, and thou art tormented, &c. *1. Corinth. 11.* When we are iudged, we are chastened of the Lord, because we should not be condemned with the world.

Seeing therfore the afflictions that are sent, doe commend Gods iustice vnto vs, we are to be perswaded that they come not from God without cause. And hereby shall all aduersities become the more easie to be borne, in that we vnderstand them to be iustly layde vpon vs. and that none so grauous can befall vs, but that we haue deserued far more grauous, if so be God should weigh the greatnes of our sinnes according to his iustice.

¶ Touching the fourth reason to speak in few words, namely that God by the calamities which he sendeth vnto men, taketh occasion to illustrate and set forth his owne power and glory, that becommeth manifest by the wordes of the Lord. *Exod. 9.* where a reason is rendred, why *Pharaoh* was so exceedingly hardened, and so oftentimes most grauously scourged with his people the *Egyptians*, for so saith

saith the Lord by *Moses* vnto *Pharaoh*: Let my people goe, that they may serue me. Otherwise I will at this time send all my plagues vpon thine hart, and vpon thy seruants, and vpon thy people, that thou maist know that there is none like me in all the earth. And a little after: And indeed for this cause haue I appointed thee, to shewe my power in thee, and to declare my name in all the world. Which wordes we see to be repeated. *Rom. 9.* But wilt thou haue me tell thee more plainely, how the glozve of the Lord was aduanced by the afflictions of the *Egyptians*? Then consider with thy selfe, whether this thing doth not make greatlie to the celebrating of the name & power of the Lord, that he shooke so mightie a people, so quicklie, and by strange meanes that were neuer heard the like, and at the length together with their King and his whole armies vtterly destroyed them almost in a moment? Who would not here honour and reuerence the wonderfull power of God, and acknowledge him to be the onely God almightie reigning in heaven and in earth? But much more on the other side doth the power of God shewe forth it selfe in that so sodaine and vnlooked for deliuerance of the people of *Israell*, which were so greatly desiected and cast downe: by reason whereof the
 Lord

Lord also would afterward alwaies challenge
 to him selfe most soueraigne praise, repeating
 this oftentimes to *Moses* and other of the *Fa-*
thers: I am the Lord, which haue brought you
 out of the land of *Egypt*. In like maner, if now
 also the Lord doth one while erect, and an o-
 ther while deiect Kinges and Kingdomes: or
 if so be he draweth thee at the last, who art in
 respect of thy body in very good health, and in-
 creased with large possessions and honors, into
 sickness, or spoyleth thee of thy goods and dig-
 nitie thou oughtest to iudge, that all this is
 done to this end and purpose, that the Lord
 hath appointed in thee to set forth to the world
 his power to be seene, which againe he will
 make to appere more glorious, whe al things
 being now past hope of recouery, and all doe
 vtterly dispaire of any helpe, he shall restore
 thee againe to thy former health, riches and
 dignitie, to the incredible admiration of all
 men. So in *Iob*, so in many others would the
 Lord haue his power to be seen, and dayly still
 doth he procure the like examples to be set be-
 fore our eyes, that it might alwaies be found
 true which the blessed *Virgin* sang: The Lord
 hath shewed strength with his arme, he hath
 scattered the proud in the imagination of their
 hartes. He hath put downe the mightye from
 their

their seate, and hath exalted the humble and meeke. He hath filled the hungrye with good thinges, and the rich he hath sent empty away. **Hitherto** must it be referred, that holy men beinge plondged in perilles and dangers haue bene wont to pray vnto God, that he would deliuer them for his holy names sake: that is to saye, that his glozve and power might by their maruailous deliuerance be aduanced, and celebrated of all people.

Now the fifth reason stretcheth most large lye of all other. The Holy ghost doth euerye where in the sacred Scriptures signifie and declare the great and manifolde vtilities which come by aduersitie, which also the godlye do with deap and aduised consideration mark and obserue, and chiefly they holde a true & right opinion of Gods prouidence. It is not (I grant) euery mans case to perceiue and see by and by, how and after what sorte crosses and calamities are sent for our good: but it behoueth vs to be enlightened in the spirit of our mind, and the cloudes of carnall cogitations to be scattered and diuen away, befoze we can understand and knowe the spirituall commodities that are setled in our miseries. For why: flesh and blood or our reason cannot otherwise iudge, the that afflictions are signes of Gods iudgment,
and

and that God when he striketh seeketh our destruction and confusion. Whereupon the wicked can very hardly in this behalfe receiue any comfort, as the which, when they perceiue nothing but the anger and displeasure of God, doe rather curse and detest God as a cruell and inflexible iudge, then humble themselues vnder his mightye hand in acknowledging their sinnes. Whereby it commeth to passe that at length falling into dispaire, whilest they continually trosse to and fro in their minde the signes of their ineuitable condemnation, they doe nothing els being drowned in the depthe of all euills, then perpetually heape one mischance vpon an other. We therfore will gather the commodities of afflictions out of the Scriptures, not all verily, but so many as we commonly meete withall, and are most apparant, and which euen the vngodly for the most part, if they were touched with any care of their owne saluation, and not vtterly blinded, might be able to perceiue.

1 First: It is profitable that men should sometimes be scourged of the Lord, to the end they might be humbled, and contained in the duties of modestie and temperance, and in no wise lifted vp by the reason of their other commodities, if they haue any. *Psal. 119.* It is good

good for me, that I am brought lowe, *2. Cor. 12.* And least I should be exalted out of measure through the excellency of reuelations, there was giuen vnto me a prick in the fleshe, the messenger of Sathan to buffet me, that I should not be exalted aboue measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrise, that it might depart from me: and he said vnto me, My grace is sufficient for thee.

So also oughtest thou to iudge of thy selfe. Although thou beest rich, although thou be descended of noble parentage, although thou beest learned, although to be shott thou art adorned with many other notable giftes: yet be to verve good purpose applyeth vnto thee some steine of dishonesty, or layeth some losse or damage vpon thee, and all because thou shouldest not be extolled aboue measure, and despise the rest of thy brethren.

2 By afflictions the Lord proueth them that be his, and loke whom he findeth valiant and constant, he crowneeth. And to be proued of the Lord is so farre off from being hurtfull vnto vs, that we ought rather to take it as an argument of his loue and good wil toward vs. Hitherto belong these places. *Proverb. 17.* As is the tining pot for siluer, and the furnace for golde, so the Lord trieth the hartes. *1. Pet. 1.*

Now

Now for a short time ye are in heauines through manifolde temptations (if neede require) that the triall of your faith, being much more precious then golde that perisheth (though it be tryed with fire) might be found vnto your praise, and honour and glory, at the appeering of Iesus Christ. *Iam. 1.* My brethren, count it exceeding joy, when ye fall into diuers tentations: knowing this, that the trying of your faith bringeth forth pacience. And againe: Blessed is the man, that endureth tentation; for when he is tryed, he shall receiue the crowne of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that loue him. Let no man say when he is tempted, that he is tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with euil, neither tempteth he any man. To witte vnto euill. For the deuill and our concupiscence doe tempt vnto euill, and to the destruction of the soule: but God tempteth or tryeth to saluation. After which sort he tried *Abraham, Gen. 22* and other of the fathers, *Exod. 16. Deut. 8.* Howbeit loke whome he trieth, to them he giueth strength, whereby they may be able to stand fast and overcome in the midst of their conflicts, according to that saying. *1. Cor. 10.* God is faithfull, which will not suffer you to be tempted aboue your strength, but will together with the tentation make a way, whereby ye may

may be able to beare it.

3 Troubles and aduersities doe cause thee to set thy minde vpon thinges profitable, they make thee more wary and wise, they prouoke thee to ensearch and learne those thinges that are good and hole some, *Esay. 26.* Also we, O Lord, haue waited for thee in the way of thy iudgementes: the desire of our soule is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soule haue I desired thee in the night: and with my spirit within me, will I seek thee in the morning. For seeing thy iudgementes are in the earth, the inhabitants of the worlde shall learne righteousnes. *Psal. 119.* Before I was troubled, I went astray, but now I haue kept thy woord. And in the same place: It is good for me, that I haue bene in trouble, that I might learne thy statutes.

4. Afflictions bring those that are exercised with them, especially ouerlong, to the cōtempt of earthlye thinges, and kinde the desire of heauenly. *Phillip. 1.* As alwaies, so now also Christ shalbe magnified in my body, whither it be by life or by death. For Christ is to me life, and death is to me aduantage. And immediatly after: I desired to be losed, and to be with Christ. *2. Cor. 4.* For our light affliction which is but for a moment, causeth vnto vs a far most excellent

excellent & an eternal waight of glorye : while we looke not on the things that are seen, but on the things which are not seene. For the things which are seene are temporall : but the things which are not seene, are eternall. **And straight waies :** Fortherfore we sigh, desiring to be clothed with our house, which is from heaven. **Howe things are there dispersed to this effect.** Some there be also *Rom 8.* For I count that the afflictions of this present time are not worthy of the glory, which shalbe shewed vnto vs. For the seruient desire of the creature waiteth, when the sonnes of God shalbe reuealed. **It followeth immediatly :** For we knowe that euery creature groaneth with vs also, and trauaileth in paine together vnto this present: and not onely the creature, but we also which haue the firste frutes of the Spirit, euen we doo sigh in our selues, waighting for the adoption, euen the redemption of our bodie.

5 By thine afflictions thou hast a certaine profe, that thou art entirely beloued of God, and art numbred amongst his deere Childzen, being graffed into his house and family. *Pro. 3.* My Sonne, refuse not the chastening of the Lord, neither be greued with his correction. For whom the Lord loueth, him he correcteth, euen as the Father dooth the childe in whome

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he deliteth. **W**herunto as a faithfull interpreter the Apostle addeth *Heb. 12.* If ye endure chastening, God offereth him selfe vnto you as vnto sonnes: for what sonne is it whome the father chasteneth not? If therefore ye be without correction, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastardes and not sonnes. Seeing then wee haue had the fathers of our bodies to correct vs, and we gaue them reuerence: should we not much rather be in subiection to the Father of spirits, that we might liue? *Deut. 32.* The Lord will iudge his people. *Ezech. 9.* The Lord commaundeth the smiters to begin at his Sanctuary. *1. Pet. 4.* The time is come, that iudgment must begin at the house of God. And for this cause is the Lord saide oftentimes in the scriptures to visite his people, whilest he striketh them: namely for that a fatherly chastisement though it be somewhat sharpe and seuer. is a token of god will and care for the safetie and welfare of the children.

6 Thou hast also this profit and commodity. If thou be afflicted in this present worlde, it is a signe, that God will blesse thee, and free thee from all paine in the worlde to come. Of which matter we haue also spoken somewhat before. To the which maye be added that saying of Christ *Iohn. 16.* Verily, verily I saye vnto you,

you, ye shall weepe and lament, but the worlde shall reioyce. And ye shall sorrowe, but your sorrow shalbe turned into ioy. A little after: And your ioy shall no man take from you, &c.

7 It is good euen for this cause sometimes to suffer the crosse, that afterward prosperitie may become the more swete and pleasant, and also that the minde might be instructed how to behaue it selfe as well in prosperitie as aduersitie: in the one, that it be not lifted vp aboue measure: and in the other, that it be not cast downe more then is mete. Witherto belongeth that moderation of the Apostle, wherof he speaketh. *Philip. 4.* I haue learned in what estate soeuer I am, therewith to be content. I knowe how to be abased, and I knowe how to abound, euery where and in all thinges I am instructed, both to be full, and to be hungrye, and to abound, and to haue want. I am able to doo all thinges through Christ that strengtheneth me: Also *2. Corinth. 4.* We are afflicted on euery side, yet are we not in distresse: we are in pouertie, but not left destitute: we suffer persecution, but are not forsaken therein: we are cast downe, but we perish not.

8 By afflictions God would haue thee to seele in thy selfe, what the state and condition of others is that are afflicted, and how and af-

ter what sorte they may be affected in their mindes: so the intent thou maist take occasion thereby to do good vnto them, as time and opportunitie shall serue. Whereupon the Apostle commendeth the *Phillippians*, telling them chap. 4. that they had doone well, in that they had communicated to his affliction, and were carefull for him: of whom he had saide before: chap. 1. that they suffered for Christ, hauing the same sight, which they saw in the Apostle, and euen then heard to be in him. Certes they that felt the like discommodities, were no doubt so much the readier to put to their helping hand. Neither can he iudge what it is to suffer aduersitie, who hath him selfe neuer suffered any.

9 God bringeth thee by many tribulations to the amendment of thy former life, for some are found to be of such a nature, that they cannot be reclaimed & brought to a better course, but by stripes. 1. Per. 4. Forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for vs in the flesh, arme your selues likewise with the same minde, which is that he which hath suffered in the fleshe, hath ceased from sinne, that he hence forward should liue (as much time as remaineth in the flesh) not after the lustes of men, but after the will of God. And in the end of the same chapter: Wherefore let them that suffer according to the wil of God
commit

commit their soules to him in wel dooing, as vn
to a faithfull creator. In the Prophets we read
oftentimes, that the Lord striketh to the end he
might heale. *Esay. 19.* The Lord shall smite *Egypt*
he shall smite and heale it: and they shall return
vnto the Lord, and he shalbe intreated of them,
and shal heale the. *Hof. 6.* The Lord spoyleth vs,
and he wil heale vs: he woundeth vs, and he wil
binde vs vp. After two daies he wil quicken vs,
and in the third day he will raise vs vps, and we
shall liue in his sight. And we shall haue know-
ledge, and in deier our selues to know the Lord.

10. It is expedient for thee now and then to
be scourged, that thou mightest be moued to
intreat the Lord for his helpe, to sing prayes
vnto God, and that thou mightest be occupied
in other such like spirituall exercises; who other
wise, if all things should fall out alwaies ac-
cording to thy desire, wouldst scarcely so much
as think of calling vpon Gods name. In the
Psalmes there are extant innumerable testimo-
nies: and in the histories we may see cuerye
where how the *Israelites*, whilest they enioyed
peace and prosperitie, became carelesse & neg-
ligent: but afterward when they were beset
with their enemies round about, or other-
wise grieuoulye scourged of the Lord, they
were stirred vp to call vpon God for helpe, to

to praise God, &c.

11 God hath appointed thee to be vexed with miseries and calamities, to the ende that in thee might shine and apper pacience, long sufferance, experience, hope, and many other such notable vertues, which for the most part are knit together, and doe mutually follow one another. *Rom. 5.* We reioyce in tribulations, knowing that tribulation bringeth forth pacience, and pacience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed.

12 Adde hereunto, that there redoundeth some commoditie by thine afflictions even vnto others also, at the least there is decreed vnto them therby an occasion of well doing. In which behalfe doubtles the providence of God deserueth no smal commendation. God would therfore haue thee, to be graued with povertye, sickness, captiuitie, or any other aduersitie, to the end that all thy neighbors and kinnes folkes might haue matter to exercise the duties of charitie, and to helpe thee and such as thou art by all the meanes they can. Which woork is full of spirituall profit and commoditie. And for this cause the Lord foretolde, that we should neuer want the poore. Whereto tend all the places touching liberalitie towards the poore, the sick, the naked, fatherlesse children, Widowes,

Widowes, Murtherers, and others by what meanes soeuer afflicted and distressed. Which if they were not, there should be taken from them to whome the Lord hath giuen great wealth and substance, all matter and occasion of well doing. Therefore euen so; this cause perhaps would God haue thee to be pinched with aduersitie, and to stand in need of other folkes helpe.

13 This spirituall fruit also do others reap by thine afflictions, namelys that so long as they perceiue thee to be humbled by the Lords rodde, they conceiue no slender feare of y^e Lord in their mindes; and this feare bringeth forth spirituall wisdome, whereby they beware by all means possible that they fall not into sinne, and so be cast down into the like dangers. For euen immediatly, whosoever seeth an other to be any thing sharpely afflicted, he is enforced to conclude with him selfe, that the like troubles abide for him also: and that whatsoeuer befalleth vnto any one to daye, the same is to be feared of him to morrowe. And this doubtlesse is a singular spirituall benefite. For so doth Christ propound vnto others the ende of those that were killed with the fall of y^e towre in Siloe, *Luk. 13.* and he threatneth that all vnto lesse they repent, shalbe he destroyed in like manner.

maner. So the Apostle *1. Corinth. 10.* propoundeth the example of those that were plagued of God, as namely the worshippers of images, committers of fornication with strange women, murmurers against God, which all he saith were severely punished of God for a warning and admonition vnto vs. And he addeth to very good purpose: Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heede least he fall.

14 What if so be God (to conclude) when he sendeth aduersitie, when likewise he giueth vnto thee being set in the middest of many calamities, strength, pacience, long sufferance, hope, &c. wil haue thee to be set forth as an example, for others to follow and imitate in their afflictions? For why, by this means, thy miseries shall not onely become very profitable to thee alone, but also vnto others. To this effect we reade *Ier. 5.* Take, my brethren the Prophets for an ensample of suffering aduersitie, and of long pacience, which haue spoken in the name of the Lord. Beholde we count the blessed which endure. Ye haue heard of the pacience of Job, and haue knowen what ende the Lord made. For the Lord is very pitifull and mercifull. *1. Thess. 1.* And ye became followers, of vs and of the Lord, receiuing the woord with much affliction, and ioy of the Holy-ghost. So
that

that ye were as ensamples to all that beleue in *Macedonia* and *Achaia*. Again in the same Epistle chap. 2. Yee, brethren, are become followers of the Churches of God, which in *Iudea* are in Christ Iesus, because yee haue also suffered the same thinges of your owne cuntry-men, even as we did of the Iewes. For the fortitude, patience, long suffering, and other vertues of the Saints are set before the eyes of the afflicted to be followed. Thou therefore whosoever thou art, that canst iudge rightly of Gods prouidence, consider with thy selfe in most earnest wise, what becommeth thee to do in affliction, remembering that God hath appointed thee at this time to be an example of patience and suffering unto others. Neither truly is it sufficient, that the notable vertues of those that haue bene famous this way certaine ages past should be laide before the afflicted: but it is very behouefull also that some liuely examples of the time present should be set before their eyes, whose actions being thoroughly marked by our eyesight haue much more force in them, then the shadowing out of other mens dooeds by what spech or eloquence soeuer. But who is able to comprehend in wordes all the commodities, which doe growe out of afflictions? As we can by no meanes searche into the

the counsell of the Lord, why namely he dooth euery thing after this or that manner: so neither can the weakenes of mans minde attaine vnto all the commoditie, especiall ye spirituall, that come by crosses and calamities. Euery man may to his power at times conuenient by the continuall reading of the Scriptures, and by the sayinges and doinges of the godly, especially when they are afflicted, gather and note other things, which are agreeable to this purpose. It sufficeth vs to haue declared these things, to confirme that which we purposed, namely that out of calamities great commodities doe come vnto vs, and therfore that we are not without cause to be resolued, that afflictions are sent of God himselte: which we suppose to auaille greatly to the commendation of the diuine providence, and likewise to the matter of comfort and consolation.

But now the matter required, that we should reckon by on a rowe the sundry sortes of calamities and afflictions, and gather out of those things that haue hitherto bene said, comforts and consolations from the consideration of Gods providence, by the which we haue proued crosses and calamities to be sent to declare the wisdome and righteousness of God, to illustrate his glory and power, and for
our

our manifolde profit and commoditie: but partlye because that were an infinite labour, and partlye for that the comfortes which doe heale any one affliction, may all fitly be applied likewise against y other miseries not greatly vnlike, at the least all one in this, that they doe exceedingly greaue and torment men: therefore we will drawe the discommodities & principall perplexities of mans life as it were into certain heads or fountaines, and wil also compose certain consolatory reasons, as occasion and opportunitie shall serue. And this thing how may we better or more conueniently accomplish, then if we follow the way and order of teaching forschewed by the Holy-ghost himselfe: whom whosoeuer followeth, cannot goe astray, and with whome a man in speaking a fewe wordes, is daigned to haue uttered many thinges abundantly. For where the Holy-ghost speaketh, in greatest breuity, is greatest length and prolitic: and vnder the speciallest want of wordes, lyeth hid most large plente of spirituall doctrine. And this vertue of the Holy-ghost we may beholde as well in many other places, as also in the Psalm 107. where in there are briefly indard, but truely if we looke more neerlye into the matter, most plentifully described certaine aduersities, into the
which

Which wretched men doe fall sometimes by the wil of God, and from the which they are again by the will of the same God wonderfully delivered. And certes it is wholly occupied in the commendation of Gods prouidence, so that there could not be found any in all the booke of the Bible moze fit and agreeable to our purpose. Wherefore we will vndertake to expound the same now at this present: which if we shall doe, not to so good a purpose as we desire, yet at the least we hope to some fruit and commodity of the godly. And first forsothe we will premise some thinges touching the argument of the Psalmie, that all thinges may become the moze clere and euident.

Who was the authoz of this Psalmie, it appereth not, sith there is no name prefixed vnto it. Certainlye that it is a worke of the Holy-ghost, and put forth by some notable man of God, it is out of controuersie. It might be reckoned amongst the Psalmes of David, as many will haue all those that haue no title prefixed vnto them to be counted for such, except peraduenture it may be thought to be of the number of them, that were vsed to be sung after the returne from Babilon: of which sort that some are extant, it is easie to iudge.

But

But neither hath this present Psalm any title among the *Hebrewes*, wherby may be gathered any certainty either touching y^e occasion or vse of it. Though indeed the *Greek* books carry prefixed Alleluia, which word offreth it selfe oft times in the *Hebzeue* in maner of a title set befoze, and it sheweth y^e such Psalmes were amongst other chosen out to praise Gods goodnes, mercy, power, & to giue him thanks. For the word *הלל* in *Hebzeue* signifieth as much, as when we say, Praise the Lord. It is compounded of the word *הל* which signifieth, to praise, to reioyce, to shine, to illuminate, and of *ל* which is one of the ten notable names of God, and it signifieth the Lord, desired, as many will haue it, of *הל* or *הלל*, which is to be, applyed vnto God because he giueth vnto all thinges their being. *Augustine* reporteth, that Alleluia is twice prefixed, and he addeth an interpretation, why it is so: but sith thou seest that it is not so much as once found in the *Hebzeue*, thou perceiuest that his labour is in vaine, and that *Augustine* was deceived by some impudent persons, which durst of their owne heads now and then foiste in or pluck out some things, cleane contrarve to the trueth of the *Hebzeue*, when yet there was no need, neither was it expedient.

Now

Now what is contained in this Psalm, or how many partes there be of it. It teacheth especially, that in all things that come to passe here bylowe, the prouidence and mercye of God do mightily preuaile, and therfore that it ought of all men diligently to be considered; that they might take occasion therby to praise God and giue him thanks. And to the end he might declare and shewe, how and after what sorte we ought to obserue Gods prouidence and goodnes in all things, he propoundeth certaine euident examples, to wit how some men are sene oftentimes by the will of God to be pressed downe with most grauous calamities, and the same againe, when they cry vpon God for helpe, to be mercifully rescued out of their miseries. By means whereof lesse men may thoroughlye be perswaded touching Gods prouidence and mercie, and all to be moued to praise and thank him. Full wel saith *Rabbi David Kimchi* that in this Psalm it is taught, that what is done among men by Chance or Fortune, is but that the wicked by Gods prouidence are afflicted for their sinnes, and againe that the same by Gods mercie are set at libertie, that so they might necessarily sing praises vnto God. But much more cleerely will this whole matter

matter be perceined, if we shall briefely unfold the number and order of the partes of the whole Psalme. In the first place is put the proposition, and euen a briefe summe of the whole Psalme, wherin he inuiteth all people to praise God for his singular godnes & mercy. This proposition is conteyned in the two first verses. Then followeth the confirmation, wherin he proueth, by certaine memoizable examples, and drawen for the most part out of the common course of life (for why these are most apt and fit to teach) how the prouidence and mercy of God are apparantly to be seen in all things. The first example is touching those that are pressed with pouertie, and being driven out of their native cuntry are enforced to wander, and to suffer bannishment: whom the Lord by his mercy succoureth in prouiding them a place where they may rest. This example is accomplished in five verses, wherunto is added a conclusion hortatorye, consisting of two verses, wherin all men are inuited to sing praises vnto God for such a worke. The second example is touching them that for some great offences or other causes are cast into prison, and yet neuerthelesse are by the Lord in his good time set at libertie: handled likewise in five verses, with a conclusion hortatorye.

II.

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tatory also, as befoze, annexed in two verses. The third example is of such as foꝛ their wicked and vngodly life are punished of God with sundry diseases laid vpon them, but are again through Gods mercy restozed to health. It is cōpized in foure verses, with a distichon added in stead of a conclusion hortatory. The fourth example propoundeth the dreadfull dangers of Saylers and Seafaring men, and how God yet in the mean time doth mercifully saue and preserue them. There are of this eight verses, with a distichon added in stæde of a conclusion hortatory. The fifth pꝛofe is variable and mixt: foꝛ it propoundeth examples of great alterations in cuntries, common-weales, noble men & commons, and hēerby (foꝛ because some region oꝛ cuntrye is made now barren, now fruitfull, and againe cleane contrary of fruitfull barren: likewise some people becommeth one while strong and mighty, and again in the turning of a hand weakened and cast down: further Princes are euen now placed in the highest dignitie, and within a while after are thꝛowne downe headlong to the ground: also the cōmons being befoze oppꝛessed are set frē) declareth that the pꝛouidence and godnes of God are highlye to be magnified and extolled. These thinges are discoursed in ten verses, with

without any hortatory conclusion following: and so endeth the confirmation.

Lastly there is one verse added to be taken for a Conclusion of the whole Psalm, and that so much the more rightly, because that in one word it repeateth the summe of all that hath bene said, yea and answereth most finely and fitly to this proposition. By these things euery man may easlye iudge of the matter and partes of this Psalm.

If thou wouldest know the kinde of the action or cause, then seeing that both in the beginning and end, and oftentimes also in the middes we perceiue open and manifest exhortations, and that all thinges tend to this purpose, namely that men might be stirred vp to praise God for his excellent godnes, shining most clearely in all thinges, it is a plaine case that this present Psalm appertaineth to the kinde deliberatiue.

The state or proposition is generall: that God is highlye to be praised, because he is exceedingly good, and maketh his godnes to surmount in all thinges.

The vse of the Psalm is manifolde, accordingly as may be obserued in it sundrye places fraughted with excellent doctrine: as: 1. That calamities are sent of God himselfe: 2. That

in sending of plagues to the wicked God sheweth his iustice: 3, That by afflictions we are stirred vp to prayer and innocation, to faith, hope, &c. 4, That such as call vpon God for aid; are not forsaken of him, but at y length are holpen: 5, That God as he doth without difference correct all sortes of men, whither they be good or bad, so also he helpeth them: 6, That the providence of God may appere on euery side wonderfull, as well when we are afflicted, as also when we are deliuered from afflictions. Many other places will we discover in the discourse it selfe. But to this end chiefly do all these thinges tend, y they minister great store of comfortes & consolations: which thing was the cause that moued vs to take in hand the interpretation of this Psalm. We wil therefore now give the enterpryse to expound it.

1 Confesse vnto the Lord because he is good, for his mercy endureth for euer.

2. Let them speake whom the Lord hath redeemed, and deliuered from the hand of the oppressor.

This is the proposition of the whole psalm by way of an exhortation. God, saith he, is good, and his mercy is euery where excellent: therefore confesse ye vnto him, praise him, giue him thanks. And they are the wordes of the Holy

Holy-ghost speaking by the prophet to euery company and assembly of the godly, wher soeuer and by what occasion soeuer they shalbe gathered together. Whither it be in y^e Schoole or in the Temple that any of the godly meet together in the name of the Lord, there is the Holy-ghost in the midst of them, and in kind, leth the hartes of euery one to praise God. Let vs therfore so take these things, as though the Holy-ghost sounded them in our hartes: and as though we felt his power secretly working in vs, let vs the more cheerefully sing praises vnto God. Thus then he saith: Confesse vnto the Lord. Amongst the Hebrewes to confesse vnto the Lord, is to praise, celebrate, and with all carefulnes to commend the Lord, and to giue him thanks for his incomparable wondrous works.

Because he is good.) The reason why and wherfore God ought to be praised of vs, and it containeth the summe of this whole Psalm. Neither in very deed is any other thing handled throughout this Psalm, then that it is shewed that the mercy and prouidence of God may be sensibly seen & perceiued in al thinges. Further **DV** is all one with good, faire, comely: whence also cometh the name **DV**, signifying many excellent vertues worthe of
 Dig. God

God. Wherefore the Greek interpreter translath it Krestos, that is to say, good, profitable, peaceable, gentle, swete: after which sort also *Augustine* readeth it Suavis, Swete. The minde therfore hearing that the Lord is god, ought immediatlye to conceiue many things of God, which may commend and set forth his dignitie, and especiallye his notable loue towards mankind. And this is it which the Prophet meaneth, when as not contented to haue called God good, he addeth also: For his mercy endureth for euer. By this addition, it becometh al men to be the more inflamed to the praising and lauding of God. For if so be we haue oftentimes heretofore had experiance of his mercy and goodnes, and besides doe couet still to see and tast of them hereafter, then ~~have we~~ have we great occasion of praising and magnifying him, especially sith we can no other way deserue his fauour, and goodwill, nor doe any thing more pleasing and exceptable vnto him. And if in case his mercy sheweth it selfe to be seene at all times and in all ages, then also ought our confession of praise and thanks giuing to be heard at al times and without ceasing. After which manner also Christ taught vs to pray without intermission, and to craue this especially, that the name of his heauenlye might

might be sanctified.

Let them speake which are redeemed of the Lord, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the oppressor.) Let the speak, to wit, praise or a song of thankes giuing And whereas it is the part of al men and at al times to sing praises vnto God and to giue him thanks: yet is this duty chæfelye required of them, that haue tasted of his liberality and godnes, and haue of him bene deliuered from most greuous perilles and dangers.

All sorts of men doe indæd feele dayly & continually Gods godnes & bountifulnes euen in this y they liue, inasmuch as it is of God that we haue our being, liue and moue, as he saith *Act. 17.* likewise that they doe dayly and continually beholde his Sunne shining: that they receiue from him the rayne in due season, and the fruits of the earth wherewith they are sustained. But these thinges inasmuch as they are vsuall and ordinary, are in such wise accounted off, as though the hand of God were not greatly occupied in them, at the least as though there were not hærein so plain a pꝛofe and demonstration of Gods godnes. But we deem them most chæfelye to feele in themselves Gods bountye and liberalitie, which are sore vexed with diuers temptations and dangers,

¶.iiij.

and

and afterward notwithstanding wonderfully deliuered. For why when we are in dangers we call vpon the Lord for helpe: and we can then at the length iudge what it is, to be either holpen of God or forsaken of God, when our hartes haue sometimes bene smitten with the smart of triales and afflictions. And as no man knoweth how profitable a thing physick is, but he that hath sometimes bene sicke, and hath bene eased by it: nor of what valewe faithfull frændes are, but he that hath bene brought to extreme neede, and tasted of their help: so none can sufficiently comprehend, how great the godnes of God is, but such as haue bene tried, and deliuered by God out of the dangers of temptations. Wherefore to those especially doth this Psalm belong, that haue bene in leopardy through sundry trialles, and they can indeede iudge rightlve touching the vse therof. We are wont to cal vpon God: and after that we haue obtained his help, it beho- ueth vs to praise God, and to giue him thanks. For this cause therfore he saith: Let the speak which are redeemed of the Lord. The word Redeemed, noteth, that they were whollve come into the Lords hand and power by reason of the greatnes of benefites received, no otherwise then bought seruantes: and is all
such

such are admonished, that they are debtors vn
to God, neither can they pretend any excuse,
why they should not sing praises to God: nay
vnlesse they do it, they shall incurre the blame
of most shamefull ingratitude. They that be
foze were in the hand and power of the oppres
sor or of affliction, are now by the Lord deli
uered, and they ought to be humbled vnder
his mighty hand, and to giue him thanks, yea
and to dedicate them selues wholye to God
their deliuerer. All things therfoze are trimly
disposed in this beginning and proposition of
the Psalm, and we may gather from thence
no single or slender doctrine.

3 And gathered them out of the lands, from
the East and from the West, from the North and
from the South.

4. They wandred in the wilderness out of the
way, and found no citie to dwell in.

5 Hungrye [they were] and thirstye, their
soules fainted in them.

6 So they cryed vnto the Lord in their trou
ble, and he deliuered them from their distresse.

7 And led them forth by the right way, that
they might goe to a citie of habitation.

Now after the proposition folloiweth a
plentifull confirmation, as in the which it is
proued by many plaine and pithy reasons, that
God

God doth liberally shewe his godnes in most tall mens matters, and most wisely gouerne all thinges by his wonderfull prouidence, and therfore most worthy to be exceedingly praised and magnified of al men. This is the first reason prouing Gods godnes to shine cleerely in all thinges, taken from an example, as also all the rest are in a manner that followe. And certes it is drawen from þe example of a thing done not only once and about one person only, but ofte times and in many persons vsuallye seene: so that thou maist rightly say, that all these pꝛofes are drawen out of the common course of life and from the vse and experience of thinges dayly happening. Which kinde of pꝛofes doubtles are most fit to moue affections withall, and besides they make that to appeere most plaine which is intended. And it is to be thought, that no man, whatsoeuer he be, can possibly read this Psalmc, but that he shall finde some thing touching himselfe, and wherby he may gather, that he also hath bene partaker of the bottomlesse godnes of God in some one necessitie or other. Neither truely is it an easie matter to finde such a one, as hath not felt in himselfe, some parte of the miseries which are here mentioned: and that, whilst he is deliuered from them, ought not to ascribe
his

his preservation only and olone to God. **Yea** and there can no discommoditie or danger almost arise, which is not comprehended vnder some one or other of the thinges that are here described, at the leastwise it will be like it or not much vnlike: wherfoze also whosoener is distressed with any aduersities, shall here haue some remedie of comfort, and shall finde matter of hope for the recovering of his safetie.

This is also further to be marked, that euerie of the proofes are so disposed, that they may fitly be deuided into two partes: wherof in the former are described the perilles which happen vnto men. in the latter is declared how they are by the mercy of God deliuered from the same: againe in the former parte the perils are very exquisitly and almost after a poeticall manner expessed by increasments, amplifications, and representings of things: and in the latter parte the deliuerance being sodainlye and without any adu obtained is laid forth the more bræfely, yet hauing now and then those thinges interlased which do not a little beautifie and illustrate the matter. And so are all thinges ordered, that a man aduisedlye marking them may out of euery member in a manner gather variable and most holosome doctrine.

This first profe therfoze is drawn from the

the example of those that for any cause whatsoeuer being driuen from their dwelling places are constrained to wander vp and downe, and to seek a place els where wherein they may rest. And very properly is the icopardy of these men described by their iourney in the desert, then the which doubtles a greater could not be deuised. For why? a man would hardly beleue (except he be one that hath had triall of it) how greatly they are grieued that wander in the wilbernes, where there appereth no humane help or succour, and nothing to be looked for but death and destruction. And therfore it is to be thought that certaine of the *Greekes* were moued to make a lawe touching a penaltie of death to be laide vpon him that would not shewe the way to one that went astraye, because they sawe vndoubtedly how sore they were tormêted that wandzed out of the way. And oftentimes into these dangers do men fall in Palestina and the cuntries next adioyning, in asmuch as all Asia for the most parte hath many deserts and obscure places, as the holy Scripture and bookes of the *Geographers* doe testifye.

Their soule fainted (or failed) in them.)
 Here thou seest the manner of an enlargement gallantly obserued. First euen to straye out of
 the

the way, is full of wearisomnesse, though it be in a Cuntry well knowen. When to goe still forth on, and not to finde a place where to rest, is much moze græuous. Afterward also to be pinched with hunger and thirst, who seeth it not to be the extremitie of all miseries, and that now nothing remaineth but cruell and wofull death: And this is it which he addeth: Their soules fainted in them. We haue a certaine resemblance of these calamities pictured in *Abrahams* bondmaide *Agar*, *Genes.* 16. in the people brought out of *Egipt* through the wilderness, where they murmured for meate and drinke, *Exod.* 16. and 17. in *Dauid* flying from *Saul*, *Sam.* 23. and 25. againe 2. *Sam.* 15. 16, when he fled by reason of the tumult raised by *Absolon*: likewise in *Elias* flying for the threats of *Iezabell*, 1. *King.* chap. 19. which all in their flight through desert places were almost dead for hunger and thirst.

But it is not without cause that the Holy ghost doth so liuely painte out these perilles. For we ought thereby to gather some instruction.

First therfore it is done to this ende and purpose, that we might learne how to behaue our selues towards those that are in miserie, and to pittie them whom we see to suffer banishment

nishment, to wander thzough vnknown cuntries, and to haue no frēds to succour them.

Secondly, that we might so much the moze exactly weigh and consider the power and goodness of God in the preservation of them that are deliuered by him out of so great distresses. How much greater the dangers are, so much moze fully doth Gods mercy shew it self in deliuerance from them.

And they cryed vnto the Lord.) The second part of the pꝛofe touching their deliuerance. And this verse is put betwēne in manner of a parenthesis, as that which is oftentimes repeated, almost in euery of the pꝛofes following. So is this in *Virgil*: Begin my pipe with me to sound Menalian verses. And this: Leade *Daphnis* from the citie home, my verses, leade him home.

And we learne out of this verse: 1. That afflictions sent of God doe stirre vs vp to inuocation & pꝛayer vnto God. Concerning which profit of aduersities we haue spoken befoze. 2. That God willingly heareth those that pꝛay in their afflictions, & graunteth their requests. Hitherto belong all the promises of God euery where extant: likewise the exhortations vnto pꝛayer: also the examples of such as, whilst they haue pꝛayed, haue been made partakers of their

their desires.

And he led them forth.) When is it the Lord him selfe that leadeth them. The thing then is not done by chaunce or fortune, neither is it by haphazard that a man strageth or returneth into the right way: but all thinges come to passe by the onely will and dispensation of the Lord. That thou goest out of the waye, that thou art in hazard and danger, it is the will of the Lord. He would be entreated of thee, and seeketh occasion to deserue well at thine hand, yea and to shewe his godnes and mercye towarde thee. Therefore all these thinges fall out for the best vnto thee, and for thy comfort, neither ought any distrustfulnes at all to come into thy minde.

8 Let them therfore confesse before the Lord his louing kindenes, and his wonderfull woorks before the sonnes of men.

9 For he satisfied the thirstie soule, and filled the hungry with goodnes.

This is the conclusion of the firste prose, wherein he exhorteth all people, to sing praises vnto God for such and so great godnes of his, shewed and exhibited vnto men endangered after that manner. And here also the former verse is interlaced or put betwene. And the other verse expressely setteth down the cause flowing

flowing from the premises, whilst namelye it opposeth the benefites receiued, as satiety and refreshing, to the miseries endured befoze in the desert.

And we learne from this place : 1. That our safetie and preservation ought to be ascribed onely and alone to God, not to our owne wisdom or to any mans help. 2. That being deliuered from dangers, or any other way whatsoeuer holpen of God, we ought to giue him thanks. 3. That we must so much rather do it; leasse if we remain vnthankfull, we should by the iust vengeance of God be plunged again into the like perrills. 4. That when and howsoeuer our estate be bettered, yet must we still beare in minde the distresses that befoze were vpon vs, & they ought alwaies after to be feared of vs. Which consideration is very profitable to the moderation of our mindes, that we vse to carry our selues in an even course aswel in prosperitie as aduersitie. For this is in deed perfit wisdom: for a man so to behaue himself in aduersity, as he may hope for better things: and againe so in prosperitie, as he may fear the contrary. Further sith the Holy ghost hath not exprest any certaine cause of their flight and wandzings through desert places, neither hath treated specially and by name either of
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the goodly or vngoodly: it is a token and argument, that this p^{ro}se belongeth indifferently to all men aswell good as bad, which for any kinde of cause are compelled to p^{ro}vide for the selves by flying, and to saile of the perrills of perigrination. Some are forced to fuge away and to wander abroad for the crueltie of their aduersaries which seek to hurt them: as *Iacob* did for *Esin*, *David* for *Saul*. Other some for the defence of rightconlines, & the studie of restoring true religion: as *Elias*, and at this day many goodly persons are constrained to fuge out of diuers countries. Some for common famishment and scarcitie of vitail: as *Abraham*, *Iacob*, *Elijah*. Some for their sinnes God being angry, are forced to saile the miseries of rovinges and wandryngs: as *Cam*. Some for refusing to obey Gods will, and to execute thei function and calling: as *Iohn*. Some for this cause, that some man hath threatned to spoyle or kill them: for which cause *Paule* escaped from *Damascus* through a wall, & *Christ* taught his Disciples, that when they were in danger for the confession of the trueth, they should seek to saue themselves by flight. Some for the tumultes and byzozes of warres: as the *Iewes* did oftentimes, but speciallve in the time of the captiuitie of *Babilon*, and in the o-

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uerthowse

uerthwhe of Ierusalem vnder *Tirus* the *Romane*. Some for the inundations and erapti-
ons of the Sea. Some for fire and burning.
Some for the spoyling of their gods, or for the
losse of them by what means soeuer either bo-
nest or dishonest: as they that bring ouer
head and eares in debt doe betake themselves
to their legges and runne away. Some for
great offences committed are bannished by
the magistrate. And who is able to reckon by
all such causes as these? Notwithstanding all
these and such like dangers may well be redu-
ced to this present place, and whosoever are
afflicted any of these waies, may fetch from
hence some solace and comfort. Only let them
call vpon the Lords name by faith, and pati-
ently waite for his helpe, and they shall vn-
doubtedly at the length feel some succour from
God: yea and he that is described heer to haue
brought the wanderers into the right waye,
and to haue giuen them a citie where they
might rest, even he also will prouide a place
for these wherein they may safely liue.

10 They that sit in darkenes and in the sha-
dowe of death, beeing fast bound in miserie and
yron.

11 Because they rebelled against the woordes
of the Lord, and abhorred the counsel of the
most

most High.

12 He also humbled their hart through heauines; they stumbled and fel and there was none to helpe them vp.

13 So when they cried vnto the Lord in their trouble, he deliuered them out of their distresse.

14 For he brought them out of darknes, and out of the shadowe of death, and brake their bonds in sunder.

They that expound this Psalm as a prophete touching y^e mercy that is offred through Christ, and touching the redemption of the afflicted mads by Christ in the time of the Gospell manifested to the worlde, do so expound this part, as that they saye that God is therfore to be extolled and praised, because he hath deliuered men out of the prison and captiuitie of sinne, death and the deuill. For why, vnder these tirants were all men held captiue, as appeareth *Rom. 7.* I see an other lawe in my members, rebelling against the law of my minde, and leading me captiue vnto the Lawe of sin, which is in my members, &c. And *Rom. 6.* they are called the seruantes of sinne. And *Zacharias Luk. 1.* Through the tender mercy of our God, wherby the daye spring from an high hath visited vs; to giue light to them that sat in darknes, and in the shadowe of death, and to guide our

fecte into the way of peace. And therfore came this captiuitie vpon them, because they were all rebels against the word of the Lord. As for the Gentiles they did vniuersallie reiect from the word and law of the Lord. And the Iewes amongst whome seemed yet to remaine some signes of Gods people, slew the seruantes of God and the prophets that were sent vnto them, as Christ also him selfe casteth in their teeth.

But this is not all: for euen after the gospel was reuealed, wherein it was propounded that they should repent, and beloue in Iesus Christ, and through him obtaine remission of sinnes, they despised this counsell of the Lord. And therfore also the Lord humbled their hart through heauines, whilest namely he permitted them to fall into greater sinnes and abomination, and to be vexed and abased by their hypocriticall workes, and that truely without any fruit at all. For why by their most painefull and laborious obseruations of the lawe and traditions they were so far of from receiuing any reward, that they also the more offended: & so they stumbled & they fell down, and there was none able to helpe them vp. Not *Moses*, not *Elias*, no nor any mortall man liuing. And yet if any of them were pricked in
their

their hartes at the preaching of *Peter* or *Paul*, so as they asked what they should do, as we read *Act. 2.* that some did: and if they craved mercy through *Christ*, God then no doubt had pitie on them, he deliuered them from the captiuitie of sinne, death, the deuill, and restored them into the libertie of faith, life and the Holy-ghoste.

Howbeit we maye not vnderstand these thinges of the Iewes alone, as though they onely had sustained spirituall captiuitie, and were deliuered from the same. *Augustine* interpreteth it of euery one that seeth himselfe bound, so as he is letted from well doing. He cryeth out, saith he, in this necessity to the Lord The Lord deliuereth him out of his necessities, he breketh the bands of difficultie, & setueth him a work with equitie: it beginneth now to be easie vnto him which before was hard & difficult, as to abstaine from euils, not to commit aduultie, &c. The Lord could giue vs this without difficultie: but if we had this without difficultie, we should not acknowledge the giuer of this benefit. For why if he could do a thing so soon as he would, and felt not his affectiōs striving against him, neither his soule ouerburthened with bands to be wounded and hurt, he would attribute to his owne strength, that he felte himselfe able:

¶ *iiij.*

and

and so the Lord should be abridged of the praise of his mercies. So much saith *Augustine*. But we doubtles will expound it grossely, after the same way that we haue begun, of y^e outward perils and dangers which are wonte oftentimes to fall out in this life, and from the which all men through the Lords goodnes are deliuered.

This is therfore the second proof to declare that the Lords goodnes and mercy shineth in all things, borrowed from the example of those that for any cause whatsoeuer are drawn into prison, where infinite miseries are to be endured. sith they liue there in very dark as persons now quite cast out from all fellowship of men, and bannished the whole world: and: et in the meane tyme cannot tell whither they shall euer be deliuered or no. Which aduersitie doubtles is not without cause accounted one of the greatest miseries that can happen vnto man. And therfore would the Holy-ghost expresse and declare this wofull state and condition with most choise and picked wordes.

First he saith, That they sit in darknes And this no doubt is a race most hard, to be barred from the sight of this common light. Secondly, In the shadow of death: he meaneth that that state of life dooth not much differ from death, yea and that euen death sometimes is to be wished

wished in comparison of such miseries; Who addeth yet further, Becing fast bound in miserie and yron; he giueth to vnderstand that many other miseries are annexed to imprisonment: as yron pinching and wrynging hard diuers partes and members of the body, as the necke, the handes, the fete: likewise hunger, thirst, colde, lack of lodging, want of sleepe, the lothsomnes of vermine and filthy saouours, diseases, the company and counsell of men removed, their helpe and succour denied, finally all things taken away that might serue for any manner of solace or comfort: And so are all things here set downe in these few wordes, as that they might incite vs the more willingly to take pitie of them that are kept in prison, and that we might the more nēly be acquainted with their miseries.

Because they rebelled.) The cause of the calamitie sent of God is by þ way put in. There are indeede diuers and sundry causes, for the which men are brought into captiuitie: but here is one named as chiefe, to witte the contempt of Gods word, or disobedience against God, which sinne is in truth the original and wel-spring of all evils. They that contemne the word of God, it cannot be, but that they fall into many other horrible sinnes also, for

the which they are at the length drawen into prison. And so howsoeuer a man deale, it be-
 houeth him to referre all other sinnes to the
 contempt of the word as to the first princi-
 pall cause, yea and the penaltie also which is
 incurred therby, must in like manner be refer-
 red to the contempt of the word. We learne
 out of this cause after this sorte declared :
 1, That calamities are sent from aboue, and
 that by the iust and good will of God. 2, That
 they are sent for our sinnes, that in our
 punishment Gods iustice may appar. 3, That
 God doth grauously punish the contempt of
 his word: touching which matter there are
 many testimonies extant in the Scriptures.
 4. That God doth most seuerely punish those
 that do not only contemne the counsell of the
 Lord and his knowen truth, but also abhorre
 it, handle it despitefullye, and besides take to
 suppress and extingvish it. But if so be we
 would loke, when we are afflicted, aswell in-
 to our sinnes, as into Gods iustice, which doth
 too too lightllye punish vs in respect of our de-
 serts certes there might be raised from hence
 no small matter of comfort.

And he humbled their hart.) An amplifica-
 tion of the miseries wherewith captiues are o-
 uerwhelmed, from the greater effect of Gods
 wrath,

Wyath. As though it were not enough for wretched men to be tormented throught-out their whole body, the Lord will haue them also to be bered in their hart & minde, that now there may be no part of man lesse free for to feele any ease or comfort. So then all hope of help and succour is described to be taken from these men, and nothing to remaine but utter desperation. And although the hart be grievously tormented with sorowes and heavines for outward and temporall thinges, as for the losse of house, goods, wife, children, &c: yet is it most of all perplered, when the minde and conscience is shaken with the greatnesse and horroz of sinnes, and with the contemplation of the most seuerer iudgement of God. For why: an vnquiet minde and a troubled conscience, is a most cruell hangman & tirant. But thou saist that it is most clarelye saide here, that the Lord himselfe humbleth their harts: wherfore we learne againe here in this place: 1. That miseries of all sortes are sent of the Lord. 2. That miseries are sent for sinnes, and not only externall, but also internall, where with the conscience is troubled. 3. That no helpe or succour can do vs any good, but so far-fowth as the Lord hath ordained. 4. That in seeking first and before all thinges for helpe, we

We must seeke it rather from the Lord, then from any creatures. First seeke the Kingdome of God, saith he, and all these things shall be ministred vnto you. And: Except the Lord buyld the house, they labour but in vaine that builde it, &c. *Psal. 127.*

And when they cryed.) The second part of the pꝛoofe touching their deliuerance. And the verse is interlaced. It is to no purpose to reapeate the thinges that haue bene befoze declared.

For he broughtt them out.) Beholde againe the Lord doth all in all. He woundeth, and he healeth: he maketh the hart sozie, and he maketh it merrie. Albeit it may seme that second causes do somewhat to the deliuerance of the afflicted: yet y matter commeth to this point, that all things ought to be ascribed onely vnto the Lord, to whom it sameth good to work effectually by second causes as by fit tooles or instruments. So *Peter Act. 12.* was indade by an Angell brought out of prison, and yet afterward beeing returned to the bꝛethzen he telleth them how the Lord had deliuered him.

15 Let them therfore confesse before the Lord his louing kindenes, and declare his wonderfull woorks before the Sonnes of men.

16. For he hath broken the gates of brasse, and
brast

braist the barres of yron asunder.

A conclusion hortatozy, as in the pzoofe befoze going, with a repetition of y cause drawen from the pzemises, for the which all men ought to sing praises vnto the Lord. But inasmuch as he dealeth heere inespaciallye with those men, that are endangered for the contempt of the word: this place is diligently to be noted for the time that now is. For vndoubtedly we ought to iudge, that as imprisonment, so also all other publike calamities whatsoeuer, happening thicke and thysfold to men in these daies, haue bene sent for the contempt of Gods word. Wherefoze it behoueth vs to be awakened (as out of a dead sleape) to esteeme moze reuerently of the word of God, that we may willingly heare it. and indeuer to liue after it. Neuerthelesse, though it be saide heere that the wicked suffred imprisonment for the contempt of the word, yet is it not meete to iudge by and by, that al those are wicked or contemnners of the word, whom we see to be cast into prison. For euen the Godly also doe fall oftentimes into the like danger, which also commeth to passe for those causes which we haue noted befoze, when we proued that calamities are sent of God iustly and for our great good & benefite. But for this cause especially

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pecially

pecially speaketh he of the wicked, that thereby we might be giuen to vnderstand, that y^e comforte touching deliuerance from such a danger to be looked for, belongeth indifferently both to the godly and vngodly. For if so be God deliuereth the wicked out of aduersities, how much more will he deliuer the godly and elect. And there is no doubt, but that the Holyghost would therfore paint out the wicked punished for their sinnes, and afterward deliuered, rather then the godly, that namely by this occasion Gods mercy might be enlarged, and appere to be the more famous and notable. For seeing he vouchsafeth to heare graciously euen the enemies of his glory, and such as haue deserued nothing but wrath and eternal damnation, when they haue called earnestlye vpon him for his mercy, and deliuereth them from the miseries wherewith they are oppressed: this doubtles is a token of rare and singular clemency (if we shall speake after the manner of men) and Gods bountifull godnes is by this means more ennobled & renowned then can possibly be vttered or exprest. For why this is the proper and peculiar work of God.

Wherefore all sorts of men indifferently as well the godly as the wicked, & for what cause soeuer coming into the perill of imprisonment, ought

ought to be partakers of this present comfort, and to draw unto themselves the things that are here spoken as touching Gods providence and goodness. If a man therefore being falsely accused and void of all blame be cast into prison, as *Ioseph* was: if any man be so ill dealt with, all only to satisfie the lust and pleasure of a tyrant, as *Herod* held *Peter* in prison to corrupt favour with the fickle multitude: if any man suffer as much for reproving over sharply of sinne, and for his constancy in defending the truth, as *Micha*, *Jeremy*, *Iohn Baptist*, and many of the Apostles were delt withall: finally if any man for offences committed (as *Pharaohs* baker, & dayly many malefactors are) be subiect to the like danger: let him call vpon the Lord with his whole hart, and there is no doubt but by faith he shall obtaine mercy, as this p^{ro}se plainely testifieth that the containers of the word were deliuered.

Further whē he speaketh of imprisonments, it seemeth conuenient that we vnderstand such other miseries also to be ment, as are annexed to imprisonment, or as are wont for the most part to follow it: as great and græuous accusations, torments, the iniquitie and crueltie of the iudge, reproches and reuilements, paines or penalties set, and to be short the most bitter sentence

sentence of shamefull death: which things undoubtedly do tey and torment the minde more then can in word be expressed. But because to stand particularly vpon euery of these, would be an infinite worke: we thinke it sufficient for vs, if by the way we admonish, that against all the crookes in like manner as against the discomforts of imprisonment, manifold consolation may be written out of those things which haue hitherto bene declared.

17. For by reason of their transgression, and because of their iniquities are afflicted,

18. Their soule abhorred all manner of meate, and they were brought euen to deaths doore.

19. Then they cryed vnto the Lord in their trouble, and hee deliuered them out of their distresse:

20. Hee sent his worde and healed them, and they were deliuered from their diseases.

They that expound this Psalm touching spirituall daungers, onely appertaining to the soule, say that it treateth here of such, as after they haue bene once gladd with the word of God, where before they wandred in the wilderness and were long pined with hunger, and where the impediments which letted the from well doing, are taken away and remoued, do yet begin againe to loathe and contemne the

woꝛde of God their spiritual food: neither do
 they passe any more for the woꝛd, but are stark
 and rent in well doing, yea altogether cold
 and frozen: An example of which matter was
 to be seene in the *Iewes*, which had the law and
 diuine oracles, & yet they liued not ther-after,
 but as dogges returning to their old vomit, as
 though there had no law at all ben giuen
 to them, they led a most foule and filthy life.
 In like manner may it be iudged of those that
 receiued the gospel in the beginning of the prea-
 ching of the Apostles, & that in our times haue
 taken vpon them to refoꝛm Churches. Certes
 the Apostle *1. Corinth. 4.* saith to vbraide
 them with such a like thing, when he saith:
 Now yee are full, now ye are become rich, with-
 out vs ye haue gotten a kingdome &c. For euen
 now began they to despise the Apostle, as though
 they had no more need in need of his doctrine.
 But more clerely of such a lothing of the woꝛd
 we may read *2 Pet. 2.* And by this meanes in
 very deed are men brought to deathes dooꝛe
 to the gates of death. Wherefoꝛe such men are
 againe healed, when the Lord vouchsafeth to
 send againe his woꝛde, *Christ* I meane to the
Iewes, oꝛ sound doctrine, which is at all times
 by chosen Prophetes and ministers testifi-
 ed to the end that al that beleue, might be saued
 But

But that we may returne to our simple manner of interpreting the Scriptures, and expound this place of outward perills and dangers: this is the third prose, proving that the mercie and goodnes of God is to be seene in all things, drawn from the example of them that fall into divers and dangerous diseases, and also are in hazard of life, and yet notwithstanding when they call upon the Lord for helpe, they are againe restored to health. Such examples we may see daily. Who is he that hath not felt great griefes and heavinesses in his body, and bene at one time or other at deaths doore: especially in the time of some common plague, or of other nygrom and contagious diseases? And yet we see them to be deliuered and to live still, though not greatly thankfull to God therfore. Therefore it behoueth all men so much the more diligently to haue an eye vnto this present Psalm, because there is none almost, that hath not felt some of the miseries at least which are here mentioned, & some wonderfull deliuerance out of the same.

And he dealeth again with the vngodly punished for their sinnes & deliuered, for the selfe same causes which we noted in the prose next before: namely that both by this occasiō Gods mercy might be amplified and made more famous,

mous, whereby he doth good even to his enemies: and also that the godlye might thereby be assured, that they likewise, when they are in like manner afflicted, shalbe deliuered by Gods bountie and goodnes.

Fooles by reason of their transgression.) first he setteth down the cause, why calamities are sent of God, saying, that for sinnes men are afflicted: that is that Gods iustice might be commended, whereby the vngodly are woorthily punished: secondly, that men being plagued for their transgressions, might haue cause to repent, and to abstaine from sinne. So there is a double vtilitie here to be considered, and either of them wonderfullye auailing to comfort. Neither doth he simply say, that men are afflicted for their sinnes: but firste also he premiseth something, saying: Fooles because of their transgression. Where it is to be noted, that there is some difference between the Hebrew and the translation of the Septuaginta. For these haue it thus: He tooke them out of the way of their iniquitie, for by reason of their transgressions they were humbled. And the sense is, that men are humbled and afflicted for their sinnes, and that because the Lord will by this meanes withdraue them from sinne, and call them home from their wicked and
 ⁂, vngodly

ungodly life. Which sence is sound and godly, and it teacheth, that men are punished, to the intent they might bethinke themselves of repentance, and be brought by afflictions to a mendment of life. And in the Hebrew it is reed thus: **אֵלֶיךָ מָרַךְ** : and thus: **וְהָעֵצָה** **וּמִעֲוֹנוֹתֵיהֶם** the sence whereof is this: That men are made fooles, and blinded through sinne, and therefore are worthily punished of God for sinne. Whereby we may note here, that the contempt of the word which was described in the example aforesaid, hath blindness and foolishnes following it, altogether after the same manner that the Apostle *Rom. 1.* describeth them that despised the truth offered, to be made frustrate in their imaginations, and their foolish hart to be darkened. When they professed themselves to be wise, they became fooles, &c. From whence we learne here out of the sence which is in the Hebrew, that this is the effect of sinne, namely that by it men are blinded, made fooles, and at length become brute beastes. Which effect of sinne ought worthily to fray all men from euill doing. And they are saide to be fooles, because they refuse the most excellent counsel of God, which he hath propounded vnto vs in his word. And this foolishnes followeth be-

ry orderly the contempt of the word, whereof bath beene spoken in the pꝛoꝛse befoꝛe going. For the word is indeede first offred, that no man should be able to alleadge any excuse: But when they reiect and abhoꝛre that, it is of necessitie that they fall most fondly and so be plunged in perpetuall folly.

Their soule abhorred all manner of meate.)
 Now he describeth another kinde of danger laide vpon men by reason of sinne. And he nameth no one certain contagious and perillous disease, by the which it might be pꝛoued that sinners are punished: but he generallye describeth the extreme danger, that groweth out of euery disease: insomuch that in truth this present place may serue to minister comfoꝛtes against all sortes of sicknesses, yett euen when men are brought to the vttermost hazard. And there is no disease so little, which in time will not growe to this point. For this cause vndoubtedly it is that the Holy ghost bath so framed and fitted together this present place. Wherefoꝛe he canningly painteth out one that is in extreme danger thꝛough the rage and crueltie of his disease. Their soule, saith he, abhorred all manner of meate. When doe we despair of the health and reconerie of the sicke party, when he not onely desireth no meate,

Æ.g.

but

but also loatheth and abhorreth it. When he is once come to this paffe, there is no likelype-
hode at all of any longer life. And therfoze he
saith: All manner of meate, that is not onelye
that which nourisheth, quickeneth and confir-
meth the members to the prolonging of life,
but also that which pleseth and delighteth the
tast. For otherwise some things are wont to
to be prepared for sicke folkes, which though
they do not greatly nourish, yet are they pro-
fitable for this cause, that by their strangenes
and swætenes they might prouoke a queysie
stomack, And he addeth.

They were brought to deaths doore.) In one
word and by a Rhetoricall similitude he de-
scribeth the most certaine perill and hazard of
lif. And it is a phrase of speech proper and pe-
cuniar to the Scripture, such almost as are the
descriptions of death in the Poets, whilst
they feigne that death hath his mates and
companions, &c. And the Latinistes, when
they would signifie any thing to be very néere
at hand, they say that it is in oꝝ pꝛæforibus. at
oꝝ before the doore. Therfoze such are descri-
bed here, as differ little oꝝ nothing from death
it selfe: and by the greatnes of the daungers,
is propounded the greatnes of Gods godnes
and mercy to be considered.

And

And when they cryed.) The second parte touching their deliuerance in a verse interlarded.

He sent his woord.) The sozmall cause of their curing or healing, which also argueth the power of God to be most mighty and meruailous. For it noteth, that when men haue applied diuers and sundry remedies to their diseases, and doe nothing preuaile, God by his only woord and becke restorēth them to health. To which effect also the *Centurion Luk. 7.* saide vnto Christ: Onely speake the woord, and my seruant shalbe whole. And Christe else-where with his only woord cured many sicke persons. To the Leaper he said: *Bethou cleane, Mat. 8.* To the Deafe and Dumme *Mark 7.* Ephata: which is to say, *Be opened:* albeit he did there put his fingers into the deafes eares, and with spittle touched his tung. And *Mark 5.* he raised a damzell from death, taking her by y^e hand saying: *Talitha cumi;* that is to say: *Damsell, I say vnto thee arise.* But what neede we any moe examples? Touching the creation of the whole world of nought it is saide *Psal. 32.* He spake the woord, and they were made. Therfore the woord of god signifieth simply his becke, will and commaundement.

They that expound this Psalm touching
Æ. iij. Spirituall

spirituall and internall dangers appertaining to the minde or soule, by the woord sent will haue to be vnderstand the Sonne of God Iesus Christ. And rightly. For he is the woord of the eternall father, his very substance & power, and by him are healed our spirituall diseases: of which matter we may reade euery where in the prophets and in the sacred Epistles.

And they were deliuered from their diseases.) He rightlve vseth the plurall number to amplifie the goodnes of God, which deliuereth the diseased, not from one distresse onley, but from many, wherof euery one were able to bring death and destruction. And truly so it is. As ofte as any man is sick vnto death, he might not onely by the force of his disease, but by other the least discommodities also annyed vnto it, be extinguished. For why? the stomack cloyed but a little with meate or drink, the inconuenient lying vpon the side or chest, yea some vsauery smell or ayer breaking forth, might kill and dispatche the wretched wight. O wofull calamitie of mankinde, subiect to so many miseries, and yet neuer departing from pryde and most pernicious affections.

Let them therefore confesse before the Lord
his

his louing kindenes, and his wonderfull woorkes before the sonnes of men.

22 And let them offer sacrifices of praise, and declare his woorkes with reioycing.

The conclusion horratory by a verse entered, hauing a more full exhortation added to thank-giuing for the benefite of health received: wherein he hath respect vnto that which was vsually for the most part among the people of olde time, who namely besides their priuate giuing of thanks did also publikeley offer sacrifice, as oft as they had received from God any notable and singular benefite. Touching which kinde of sacrifices and rites who so list may looke *Leuit. 7.* And how King *Hezechia* the third day after his sicknes went by in to the house of Lord, and sung praises vnto the Lord, we may see, *3. King. 20.* and *Esa. 28.* And he addeth very elegantly a particke touching the true vse of sacrifices, and as touching that kinde of sacrifice, which it becommeth vs also at this daye to vse. And that is to declare the woorkes of the Lord with reioycing. For by this meanes especially doe we offer a most acceptable sacrifice to God, if so be we praise his godnes (which we haue found by experience in our selues) to others, and stirre them by in like manner to praise God with vs. For why?

E. iij.

this

this is in very deede to prouide, that by true and spirituall sacrifices the name of God may be truly sanctified and hallowed.

And albeit it be saide afoze that God healeth them that are nere vnto death, by his only word; yet must we not gather heerby, that they are not healed of God, which are cured by taking of simple medicines after the prescription of the arte of Physick. For sith we proue daylye by experience that the vle and vertue hereof is very great, it behoueth vs to holde, that the power of God worketh in these things, and that they can in no wise do any thing of themselves, but so far forth as it pleaseth God to work in and by the same: accordingly also as we see oftentimes that although many and good simple medicines be given to some sicke folkes, yet is it without any fruit or effecte at all following: and 2. Chron. 16, King Asa is graciously reprov'd, who regarded more the skill of the Physicians, then he did the godnes of God. But touching this poynte more was saide of vs, when we entreated of second causes. Wherefoze by whatsoeuer meane and from whatsoeuer sickness any be restored to their former health, it is meet and convenient that we vnderstand them to be healed by God, and his word: that is to saye,
by

by the good wil and pleasure of God. For why: all simples are created of God, and doe receiue from him their secret vertue: Whisick is giuen by God vnto men, as witnesseeth the wise *Hebrue Eccle. 38.* and the Church receiued from God the gift of healing, *2. Corinth. 12.* Wherefore which waye soeuer a man recouereth his health, whither it be by miracle or by ordinary meanes, he ought to giue all thanks onely to God, and to offer the sacrifice of praise vnto him alone. Wherefore also al they that are now sick, and with what diseases soeuer they be afflicted, whither with the plague or pestilence or with any other contagious or lesse dangerous sickness, let them knowe, that the things which are here spoken doe belong vnto them, and let them not only therby take comfort, but also learn how and after what sort they ought to behaue themselues toward God, after they be deliuered.

23 They that goe down to the Sea in shippes, and doo their woorke or busines in great waters.

24 They see the woorkes of the Lord, and his wonders in the deepe.

25 For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormie winde, which lifteth vp the waues therof.

26 They mount vp to the heauen, and descend

scend to the deepe, so that their soule melteth for trouble.

37 They are tossed too and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and al their cunning is gon, or they are euen at their wittes end.

38 Then they cry vnto the Lord in their trouble, and he deliuereth them out of their distresses.

39 For he causeth the tempest to cease, so that the waues thereof are still.

30 So when they (the waues) are quieted, they reioyce, and he bringeth them to the hauen, where they would be.

Some do expound this parte of al the godly in general. For whosoever endeuering after true holines goe downe to the sea, that is, into this worlde, intending to worke in great waters, that is, to teach the people (for water signifieth the people) by word and example: such men see þe workes of the Lord, which the worlde leeth not. In the meane time they are shaken with great temptations, so as now they are euen as it were hoysed vp to the heauen, whilst overcoming their aduersarye they fixe their hope on high in heavenly thinges, & are strong in faith: and againe they descend into the deep, whilst throught the rage of their aduersarye the tempter, and the greatnes of troubles, they
sunk

sink downe as it were into desperation. And
 a long time do they continue in these dangers,
 so that there seemeth now no refuge or succour
 to be left vnto them. But at length they call v
 pon the Lord, who allayeth the tempestes of
 temptations, sendeth them help and comfort,
 raiseth them vp againe and strengthneth them
 in faith, vntill at length they be brought to the
 hauen of eternall saluation. It liketh others
 to expound it onely of the gouerners of Chur
 ches, to whome is committed the Shippe of the
 Church to be gouerned: such Ship-men were
 the Apostles, being made y^e fishers of men. And
 such do a worke in deed great & difficult, whilst
 they labour in many waters: that is to say in
 a great and mightye people to procure the
 things that belong to all their welfares and
 safetie. These doe most deeply search the works
 of the Lord, and obserue his wonders. But
 immediatly the aduersarye the deuill stirreth
 vp the hearts of the wicked, which moue might
 ty tragedies and tempests, raise vp heresies,
 offences, dissentions and hurburles, so as
 the Ship of the Church may seeme to be as good
 as drowned, and the godly ministers themselues
 driuen almost to dispaire. Thus the whole
 Ship is shaken, but especially the gouerners of
 the Church are so troubled, that there remaineth

neth no way or meane, wherby they may pre-
 serue the doctrine, which with great labour
 and trauell they befoze had planted. But euen
 then the Lord being called vpon heareth both
 the Ministers and the Church, he commaun-
 deth the tempestes to be still, he extinguisheth
 the wanes of persecutions, the windes of he-
 resies and vaine doctrine, he scattereth the
 threating stormes of stumbling-blockes and
 offences, finally he giueth to the Churches and
 their ministers desired peace and tranquillitie,
 and bringeth them all to the happye haven of
 saluation where they would be. And as these
 thinges are spoken of the Ministers of y^e word
 which rule and gouerne the ship of the church,
 so may they not be unfitly taken of the godlye
 Magistrates, which labour with their great
 perilles and dangers to maintaine sound and
 sincere religion. Yea and it is the common ca-
 lamity of many: so; why the Ship-men and
 Ship being in danger, it followeth of necessity
 that al they are in danger likewise that are ca-
 ried in in the same Ship.

But we so; our partes will take all things
 simply, & content our selues with a baser sense.
 This is therfoze the fourth proof declaring the
 godnes and mercy of God to be preeminent in
 all things, borrowed from the example of those
 that

that sayling by sea, haue the perilles of ship-
wacke and drowning euery hour, what say I
hour: nay moze truely energe minute of an
hour befoze their eyes. Neither is this misery
a matter of small importance or a thing rarely
happening, but greater in very deed and moze
commonly scene then can either be expressed or
beleued, but of such as haue had tryall of it:
and therfoze it is not without cause reckned
here amongst the greatest and most grauous
dangers.

And the former part touching the dangers
is here moze plentifully discoursed then in the
other proofes befoze going: which appereth es-
pecially for this cause to be done, that such as
haue had no experience of them, could other-
wise hardly be brought to vnderstand what
they meane. For such men it was mete that
the matter should the moze largely & plainly
be described. I dare be bolde to say this, that
in the Poets are extant notable descriptions
of tempests & ship-wackes, but yet in so few
wordes there is none moze plaine and pithie,
then this same of the Prophets is. And he pro-
fith a proposition, wherein he generally pre-
poundeth, that such as saile by sea, do ofte-
times trie by experience how great the godnes
and power of God is. They that goe downe to
the

the sea, saith he, &c. In Rivers doubtles, especially such as are navigable, the boates sometimes rushing against a rock or block sticking fast in the bottome, are burst in peces: sometimes also cūning swimmers through the deep gaping of the earth wherby the water turneth it selfe round about continually are swallowed vp: but these things are nothing to the perils of the sea. Therfoze he saith: They that goe downe to the sea in shippes. Neither talketh he of those, that haue sailed perhaps once or twice in their life time and no more, and that in a choise time and season of the yere, when the pleasant westerne windes haue blowen: but of such as worke and follow their busines in many waters, that is to say, who exercise themselves there continually, & who by trauailing on the sea, carrying and recarrying of marchandise, fishing &c. provide for their necessary living and maintenance. Such therfoze see the workes of the Lord & his wonders in the deep: they see, I say, what the Lord will and can do both in afflicting & deliuering, also how wonderful a worke-man God is, what and what manner of thing his providence is in the condition and conseruation of all things. Specially such as are seene in the sea. Witherto belonge the things that are mentioned of wyters touching

ching the meruailes of the Sea, as of beastes, stones, monsters, and such as are dayly found a freshe, which we cannot now conveniently stand vpon.

For he speaketh the woord, and the stormye winde ariseth.) The profe of the proposition, drawen from this that God himselfe raiseth vp incredible tempestes on the Sea. He speaketh (saith he) to witte God, biddeth, commaundeth, willeth. He speaketh spake the woord, and they were created. And he raiseth vp the winde, the blustering blastes: such as the Philosophers and Poets report Boies and his companions the Northern winde to be. And her we learn again: First, That storms and tempestes and such like thinges come not to passe by Contingence or Haphazard, but be procured for certaine causes by God himselfe. he wil haue men to be dismayed with feare and to be humbled, he will haue them to be mindefull of repentance and of death, he will be inuocated and called vpon of them. Secondly, it is most clereley said here, That calamities are sent of God.

Which listeth vp the waues thereof. They moue vp to the heauen, & discend to the deep.) A trim discription and liuely representation of a tempest raised by the winde, wherein both

both by the violence of the waues the shippes are lifted vp aboue measure. and againe by the sinking downe of the waues, they are as it were most deeply drowned. For why y^e ships are continuallye tossed to and fro, hither and thither, none otherwise then a tennis ball is tossed by the hands of the players.

Very strange it is doubtles and wonderful, to beholde such huge and massye shippes to be so forcible driven as they are, and further in the falling downe to be so overwhelmed on euery side with waues, that thou wouldest verily think thy self to be entwapped in the midst of the waters. And all these thinges the Lord both, who hath both sea and windes at commandement : and therfore in the song of the children euen the stormy windes also and waues of the sea are prouoked to praise the Lord.

So that their soule melteth, or is dissolved, for trouble.) He addeth touching the affections of them that are endangered through the tempest, that so the greatnes of the danger might the more clearly appere : and by increasement he heapeth vp all things, that by the greatnes of the danger might be valued the greatnes of Gods godnes and mercy, whereby they are deliuered from distresse. Their soule melteth, saith he.

he. He first setteth befoze our eyes the moſte
 grauous motiōs oꝝ affections of their mindes.
 For it behoueth them to be vehementlye
 troubled; and the dangers to be very great;
 where the mindes are ſo immediatlye affright-
 ed and ſhaken. Secondlye he deſcribeth
 alſo the motions oꝝ affections of their bodies,
 by a certaine Rhetoricall reſemblance oꝝ ſi-
 militude. They are toſſed to and fro, ſaith he,
 and ſtagger like a drunken man. And this is a
 moſt apt ſimilitude. For by reaſon of the con-
 tinuall toſſinges of the whole Shippe, they al-
 waies reele to and fro and cannot ſtand by,
 right on their ſæte, but are ſwayed with their
 whole bodies, one while this waye, another
 while that way. Thirdly he addeth by encreaſe-
 ment oꝝ amplification that which noteth their
 extreme feare oꝝ deſperation, ſaying by a fine
 metaphor, that all their cunning is gon: that is
 to ſaye, that there remaineth no direction in
 them, and that they ſeeme alſo to be deſtroyed
 of common ſence and feeling. This is therefore
 a moſt apt diſcription of dreadfull and deſpe-
 rate dangers. And this ſo great a perturbati-
 on of their mindes commeth by the conſidera-
 tion of things ſo right ſtrange and wonderful:
 to wit becauſe they ſee the wonderous works
 of the Lord in the deepe. Whereby we learne

here: 1, That the power and providence of God is wonderfull, working euery-where and in all creatures. 2, How great the misery of man is, and how utterly unable he is to holde out in any dangers. 3, The vanitie of carnall wisdom is offered especially to be considered, which in great dangers corporall and eternall (I say nothing of spiritual and inter-nall) is able to do nothing at all.

Then they crye vnto the Lord.) The second parte touching thzir deliuerance, againe set down by a verse interlaced.

For he causeth the tempest to cease.) Trim-ly againe is the power & godnes of God here illustrated and set forth, whilest by a new hy-potyposis or representation of things he describeth the tempest to be stayed, their mindes that were in danger, to be cheered, and they brought to their long wished for haue. The waves are still or silent, is a metaphoricall speech: for because that in a tempest the Sea through the iustling together of y waues maketh a kinde of bellowing, and horrible noise. And he proceedeth in the selfesame order here speaking of their deliuerance, which he had proceeded in the former parte touching the dangers. For first he describeth the stilling of the tempest, next the ioyfull hautes of the saylers, and

and thirdlye he noteth their happines in arriuing at their longed for hauens. And as he said befoze, that the tempest was raised by the word and beck of the Lord: so here againe he saith, that the tempest is stilled by his commaundement. Whence we learn againe, that nothing commeth to passe by happendepaize in these matters, and much lesse by Chaunce or Fortune, but that all thinges fall out by the singular prouidence of God: and that perilles are procured of God, and againe men by God deliuered out of them: further that it dependeth not vpon our will, to goe to any place, whersoever we would be, but vpon the will of God: as *Iames* also in his Epistle chap. 4. teacheth vs to adde alwaies, as ofte as we purpose to do any thing: If the Lord will, and if we liue, we will doo this or that.

31 Let them therfore confesse before the Lord his louing kindenes, and declare his wonderfull woorkes before the sonnes of men.

32 And let them exalte him in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders.

The conclusion hortatory by a verse interlaced, hauing a moze full exhortation added to praise and celebrare the goodnes of God, much like as in the pzoofe befoze going. And truelye

so it is wont to come to passe, that they which haue escaped a tempest or shippewreck, doe delight afterwards to tell it vnto others, and that with a certaine pleasure, and taking as it were therby a kinde of a comfort in their calamities : as he also (to witte *Eneas*) said vnto his company.

*Perhaps these thinges another day,
Will pleasure be for to displaye.*

But they seldome so repozte them, as to referre their deliuerance to the worke of the Lord, and so to procure glozy vnto him, which was indeed their speciall duetie to doe. Wherefore the Lord would haue our euasion out of dangers to be so declared, as that not onely we our selues might seeme to praise the Lord, but that others also together with vs might be stirred vp to the selfesame dutie. With which thing God is so delighted, as with no sacrifice the like : yea and we cannot shewe a moze notable token of our thankfulness then by so doing.

And it containeth a prittie partition, wherein of the multitude of belauers, he calleth some the people, and other some the elders, or superiours : and of the people he maketh a congregation

congregation, and to the elders he attributeth an assemblie: noting therby a certain difference of degrees, and vnderstanding the whole multitude of belæuers, of whome it is requisite that the Lord should be praised for the dayly benefites which he bestoweth vpon them. And as we haue heere a foyme of consolation for those that are deliuered from fearefull tempestes on the Sea: so may they fetch comfort from hence, which hauing made shipwreck, and lost peraduenture their goods and marchandise, haue yet themselues escaped safe and sound. In which behalfe also the godnes and power of God ought to be considered. In like manner are we to think of them that are deliuered out of the hands of thæues and robbers, also out of the publike peril of fire or burning. For these calamities are almost a like, and the selfe-same reasons of comfort maye rightly be applied to all of them indifferently.

33 He turneth the foulds into a wildernes, and the water springes into drye land.

34 A fruitfull land maketh he barren for the wickednes of them that dwell therein.

35 Againe he turneth the wildernes into pooles of water, and the dry land into water springes.

36 And there he placeth the hungry, and they build a citie to dwell in.

37 And sowe the feedles, and plant vineyards,
which bring forth fruitfull increase.

38 For he blesseth them, and they multiplye
exceedinglye, and he diminisheth not their
cattell.

39 Againe men are diminished and brought
lowe, through tyrannycall oppression, wicked-
nes and affliction.

40 He powreth contempt vpon princes, and
causeth them to wander in desert places out of
the way.

41 And he raiseth vp the poore out of misfe-
rie, and maketh him families like a flocke of
Sheepe.

42 The righteous shall see it, and reioyce, and
all iniquitie shall stop her mouth.

All these things put in the last place, it hath
pleased some to expound touching the calling
of the *Gentiles*, succeeding in the place of the
Jewes, that they might be the people of God.
Among the *Jewes* doubtles were first of all the
floods, that is to say the giftes of the Holy-
ghost, the doctrine of the Lawe and the Pro-
phets, which whosoever drew, had life: there
was amongst them the Kingdome of God: but
afterward it was taken away, and given to
an other nation, that brought forth the fruits
therof. The branches were broken of the right
Olive

Oliuetree, and grassed into the wilde Oliue:
Rom. 11. And verily this reiection of the *Iewes*
 came to passe for the wickednes of the inhabi-
 tantes, for their sinnes, and chæfely for their
 vnbelæfe: or as *Paule* speaketh, for because
 they would establisth their owne righteousness,
 the Lord blinded them and hardened them.

Againe on the other side God turned the wil-
 dernes into poles of water, when the *Gentiles*
 were brought and receiued into the Kingdom,
 and became the people of God, receiuing the
 gistes of the Holy-ghost, and the Baptisme of
 holesome water. Moreover God placed there
 the hungry: that is to saye, sinners acknow-
 ledging their necessitie, hungring and thirst-
 ing after righteousness. Which prepared a
 Citie to dwell in: that is to say, they grew vp
 into the Church of God. And they sowed, with
 the seed of Gods word the felds of their harts.
 And they planted Vniardes, they gathered
 Churches in diuers places, or they became
 the true branches of the true Vine, which is
 Christ. And they brought forth fruite of spiri-
 tuall increase, whilst euery man brought forth
 according to the measure of his gistes, spiritu-
 all fruites, some thirtie folde, some sixty folde,
 and some a hundred folde. God in the meane
 season blesseth them: for asmuch as true god.

lines hath the promises both of this life and of the life to come. Their cattell, that is to say, their weake and simple brethren, are not diminished, that is, with aduersities or wicked doctrines cast downe, seduced, or destroyed. But afterward the same are againe diminished and brought lowe, when namely they being now full, begin againe a freshe to neglect and to loath the word of God. Few are found to be truly godly, fewe to haue faith and charitie. There entred in pride and vaine glory, corrupt doctrine, hypocrisie, sectes and schismes among themselves, and so their Kingdome being deuided could no longer endure. Further the Lord poureth contempt vpon princes, that is to say, bishops and doctors: For whilst the world seeth them gaping after riches, pompe, pride and vaine glory, it beginneth also to despise both them and their doctrine. Experience teacheth vs this. And so they themselves wander in desert places, out of the way. They are addicted to Philosophie and to their owne canons and traditions, but as for the word of God they haue utterly neglected it, I will not say oppressed it. Neuerthelesse in the meane time the Lord lifteth vp the poore here & there scattered, out of miserie, to witte that they should not be troubled or molested with the calamities

lamities of the Church: and maketh them families, litle Churches and dispersed, as a flock of sheepe, accounting them for lawfull assemblies, nay for his true and lawfull Church, acknowledging in them his sheepe, as they also acknowledge his voice. After this manner certes may the Psalmie not vnaptlye be expounded, and indeed certaine excellent doctors of the Church haue expounded it, as *Augustine* and *Pomeran*. In the meane season *Hicrome* and *Arnobius*, from that place wherein it is said, And again they are diminished & brought lowe: haue a little otherwise prosecuted the sence, namely as touching Martyrs, by whose afflictions the number of the faithfull is diminished, whilest for feare of paines and tormētts many shrink from the faith and from y^e church. But afterwards the tirants and persecutors beeing againe humbled by God and brought into contempt, the poore are againe deliuered, that they may freely and without feare praise God in the Church. But the former exposition is much better in my iudgement. After this sorte therfore do many interpret this part of the Psalmie touching the calling of the *Gentiles* and state of the church gathered of the *Gentiles*, insomuch that they haue also prefixed this title to the whole Psalmie, namelye that
it

it singeth of the mercy of God offered through Christ, and of the calling of the Gentiles: and that not amisse, as we haue already sayde. It hath liked others to affirme, that this Psalm preacheth of Christ and of the people by him redeemed, and of the Synagoge to be conuerted vnto Christ.

Let euery man be wise, but vnto sobrietie, and so farre forth as is profitable to edification. That which y^e Lord revealeth not to one, it is certaine, he revealeth to an other. But we as we haue hitherto done, will procede to drawe out the plaine sence and meaning of the wordes. Therfore we haue placed here the fifth p^rose, wherein it is shewed, that the goodnes & p^rouidence of God doth shine most clere in all things. And it is variable and mixt, comprising diuers examples seruing to y^e purpose. Of which the first is deriued from great & memorable mutations or changes, which do oftentimes happen in cuntries and p^rouinces, by reason of fertilitie or barrennesse, which is induced not through the time or season, nor also by the weather or such like cause, but as to endure continually, and not lightly to be changed or amended.

Howbeit where these things should be done, the Scripture mentioneth not: yet haue men
by

by obseruation and experience found thē out. We may gather some thinges out of credible Historiographers. *Aristotle* sheweth, that in the times of the *Troians* *Hellas* (a parte of Greece) was all ouerflowen, and therfore barren, and *Mycene* meruailous good and fruitful: but afterward cleane contrariwise it fell out that this last became a standing pole, and that other dried vp and manured. And that sometimes lands haue issued out, and the same begun to be inhabited, wher before were waters: againe y^e waters haue ouerflowed & possessed all things, where before were habitable cuntries, it is no hard matter to proue out of the Philosophers, Historians and Poets. Our *Tertullian* in his *Apologeticus* and Booke *De Pallio* hath many things agreeable to this present place. *Rhodes* and *Delos* two Ilandes in y^e sea came sodeinly forth to light. To the *Cyclads* were adioyned Ilands by little and little now some and then some. *Homer* in his booke 4. of *Odyssea* recozdeth, that from the Iland *Pharos* into *Egypt* was the distance of a night and daies sayling, all which space is now annexed to the firme land. Touching which thing also *Pomponius Mela* writeth in his booke 2. and *Lucan* in his booke 10. If we may credit *Herodotus*, the Sea sometimes from aboue *Memphis*

phis to the mountaines of Ethiopia went all o-
 uer. The same testifieth, that it flowed be-
 rye nigh to the Temple of *Diana* of Ephesus.
 On the other side, whatsoeuer is betwix the
 towne Rhegium and Cicelie, that was once
 champion ground, now it is a great and large
 Sea, many Autho^{rs} witnessing the same: as
 namely *Tertullian* in his *Apologeticus*, *Solinus*,
Iustine in his booke 4, *Virgill* in his booke 3. of
Eneidos, *Sylus Italicus* booke 14. *Philo* in his
 booke *De Mundo* writeth, that the thre cities
Egira, *Bura*, and *Helice*, were by the violent
 rage of the Sea swallowed vp. *Dea* and the I-
 land *Atlas* (as *Plato* mentioneth in his *Timeo*)
 with a certaine portion of Asia and Aphrica,
 thzough Earthquakes and strange floods con-
 tinuing by the space of fower and twentye
 holwres, sanke sodenly downe and was ouer-
 whelmed of the sea: Which sea by that mis-
 fortune became verie rough and dangerous
 and in no wise afterward passable o^r saileable.
 By these things we may easilye vnderstand,
 that such notable and memorabile alterations
 as are here spoken off, doe not seldome times
 come to passe.

And there are five metonymies o^r denomi-
 nations, when as to signifie barrennes, he
 putteth the desert, a thirstie place, the dry land
 and

and salte licour. For in such places nothing is wont to growe. Where the fresh water runneth not, nor the raine conueniently moysteneth, there doubtles is neither sowing nor reaping: as in sandy places, on the shoze, and on the tops of hils is to be sene. Likewise where the earth is salt and blackish, or salte is digged, there doth not lightlly growe any thing. *Plynie* in his booke 31. chapt. 7. saith, that all and euery place wherein salte is found, is barren, and bringeth forth nothing. Whither it seemeth to belong, that *Iudges* 9. *Abimelech*, when he had subuerted the citie Sichem, did sowe salt there, signifying that he would make that place from thence-foorth vtterly barren and void of habitation. To the like effect there is extant a thzeatning in *Jeremy* 17. Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arme, and withdraweth his hart from the Lord, For he shalbe like the heath in the wilderness, and shal not see when any good commeth: but shall inhabite the parched places in the wilderness, in a salte land, and not inhabited. Blessed be the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shalbe as a tree that is planted by the water, which spreadeth out her rootes by the riuer, &c. In these words of the Prophet thou seest in like manner fertilitie to be

be signified by wateringes, and moystures, as also in this place are put floods, water springs, pooles of waters.

For the wickednes of them that dwell therein.) The cause why such alterations are brought vpon lands as also vpon the soile and vpon the Sea. The Lord, saith he, dooth it, purposing to punish by his iustice the sinnes of the inhabitants. And so commonly commeth it to passe, where a Cuntry is fruitfull and plentiful in all things, there the inhabitantes for the most part thzough the plenty of things fall to idlenes, from idlenes to wantonnes and the vices that flowe from thence. Which when it commeth to passe, the Lord being prouoked to wrath, sendeth barrennes and many other aduersities, till as by little and little they either repent, or els are vtterly destroyed. Such alterations of cuntries, cities, & commonweales, we may see dayly. Examples we haue at this day most chæfly in *Italy*, which is a most happy and fruitfull cuntry: but with how great calameties haue we seene it battered and shaken, though it hath not been vtterly ouerwhelmed with waters: And heer fall to the ground the causes of alterations, which the Philosophers are wont to bring and alleadge, saying, that thzough a certaine necessitie, and force

force of the superioꝝ bodies governing these in-
 ferioꝝ things here belowe, the lands and seas
 doe keepe this oꝝder of nature, that by a cer-
 tain interchangeable course and compasse they
 are one while better, another while worſſe, e-
 uen like as we ſee man alſo to be dealt withal,
 who firſt of all in his infancy and childehoode is
 weake and without ſtrength, but afterward
 growing in yeeres he gathereth ſtrength, and
 commeth at length by little and little to great
 perfection: but then again when age commeth
 on he dꝛoupeth and decayeth. Thus I ſay, they
 ſuppoſe the caſe to ſtand generally with wa-
 ters and lands thꝛough a certaine force and
 power of the ſuperioꝝ bodies ruling al inferioꝝ
 things, and of this opinion was aſwell *Aristo-
 tle* in his *Meteorologiks*, as alſo *Strabo* in his
 booke 17. and other moe diſputing of theſe mat-
 ters. But in this place it is expreſſely ſaide,
 that al theſe thinges are wrought by the Lord
 himſelfe, and euen then verily, when it plea-
 ſeth him to reuenge the ſinnes of men the in-
 habitants, oꝝ otherwiſe to declare & ſet foꝛth
 his iuſtice, power, and goodnes. Wherefoꝛe whe-
 ther ſuch changes and alterations doe fall out
 ſodeinly, oꝝ ſlowly and moze leiſurely: & whe-
 ther by hidden cauſes, oꝝ by open and manifeſt
 (as if earthquakes, inundations of waters,

or such like means goe before)it becometh not to determine by and by, that they come to passe by a certaine entercourse of things or contingently, but by the determinate will and purpose of the Lord, which yet notwithstanding men cannot alwaies perceiue and see. Wherefore we learne againe heer very clærly, that all things which happen in this worlde, are ordered and disposed by Gods prouidence: and that crosses are sent for the sinnes of men and benefites giuen fræly thzough the onely mercy and godnes of God: againe, that God will alwaies illustrate & set forth his iustice, power and godnes. And al these things ought we in the like euent, whilest namely thzough tempests, thzough caterpillers and other vermin destroying the fruites we haue a barren yeare and scarsety of victuals, or are in danger thzough infection, or distressed by any other meanes not much vnlike, to turn them to our comfort and consolation.

And there he placeth the hungrie.) The second example prouing Gods godnes, and prouidence to be preeminent and to beare swaye in all things. Drawen from the alterations and sondrye successes, which are perceiued to be in the Land-dwellers themselues and peoples or common-weales. The forner example concerned

cerned the very lands & cuntries themselves, this the dwellers & inhabitants of them. And it painteth out the poore and needy, who first of all begin to dress and manure a place that laye betwixt vnhusbanded, to bulde Cities, to solue the fieldes, to plant Viniardes, in such wise that they are estates encreased, made rich, and raysed to great power and dignitie. But shortly after they are againe suppressed, their power and gloze is by little and little diminished, until at length they fall to utter ruine and decay. An example hereof we may see after a sort in the people of God, who were before fewe in number, and had a very small and base Common-weale, what time they came first to the land of promise. But afterward in procelle of time the dignitie of their Common-weale grew up and encreased, inso much that in the daies of *Dauid* and *Salomon* it was aduanced to the highest point of honours and renowne. Notwithstanding after a fewe yeeres their Common-weale againe decayed, and was miserably defaced: yea and at length they were all caried away captiue, and their whole Cuntry destroyed, so as from that time forward they could neuer be restored again to their former dignitie. But more clereley may such euents and successes be scene in the begin-

nings, proceedings, and subuersions of Monarchies and Kingdomes, which haue been famous and notable. Amongst all other, and specialllye of the *Babilonicall* and *Romaine* empire the first beginninges and originals were very base, namely such as in barren and desolate Cuntries were first enterprised and taken in hand by a Hunter and a Shepheard, who immediatly gathering strength by violence and oppression of the next borderers found the meanes in some sorte to encrease their owne estate: insomuch that afterward their power grew exceeding great, hauing vanquished and subdued even many and mighty nations: but when they had now no waies or meanes left to climbe any higher, they fell downe as fast, and were by their owne proper poize & weight ouerwhelmed and oppressed: so that we may well say, there were indeed such mightye Monarchies, but they are gone and their place no more to be found. In all these things therfore ought the power, goodnes, and prouidence of God deeply to be considered of vs, and highly to be praised and commended.

And with apt and fit words hath the Prophet expressed his meaning. He calleth y^e poore and needy, and such as were obscure persons, and destitute of all succour, Hungrie: such as we

we may say the *Isralites* were, when they entered into the land of promise, likewise *Nimrod* the Hunter, and the Shepheards that builded Rome. And these prepare a Citie to dwell in. Pouerty is the inuenter & mistresse of artes. Necessitie compelleth men to deuise and attempt many thinges which otherwise should neuer be attempted nor taken in hand. Therfore the hungrye and nedy, are painfull and diligent to prouide thinges necessarye for this life, to encrease riches, and in proesse of time to accomplishe great and mighty matters. Sea and all thinges are disposed in an apt and very good order: 1, they prouide a Citie and dwelling places: 2, they solue the feldes: 3, they plant vineyardes: 4, they gather in y fruits: 5, their flockes and Cattell are increased and multiplied. And this is the way and manner euen in nature it selfe, and pertaining to good husbandry, wherby wealth and substance may be encreased: and this distributien comprehendeth all apt and orderly meanes, which are required to the encreasing and enlarging (after an honest sort) of the Common-weale.

Againe in the other parte touching the decay or decreasing of y same Common-weales the partes and members are with like elegance, and in an excellent order disposed.

A. g.

Againe

Againe, saith he, they are diminished and brought lowe: this he vttereth generallye in this sort. And he addeth the causes or meane, For their imperious gouernement, saith he: that is, for their oppresseion, when namelye God stirreth vp others to oppresse them. As the *Iewes* were oppressed by their next neighbours and by nations a farre off, and the *Babylomians*, by the *Persians*, the *Persians* by the *Medes*, the *Medes* by the *Grecians*, the *Grecians* by the *Romaines*, the *Romaines* by the *Gorhes*, *Vandals*, and other peoples, which brought destruction to the *Romaine* Empire. So also all other Common-weales though neuer so flourishing in prosperitie, are by warres and violence of other that are stronger and mightier battered and ouerthrowen. By or through euill, that is to say calamities publikely sent: such as are contagious diseases, the plague or pestilence, wherby great and populous Cities become boide and empty, and such like euils as diminish the number of the people. By affliction, that is to say, sorrow and heavines of minde, which euen killeth and destroyeth men by reason of y calamities which they see and feele. And so there is here a certaine foyme of enlargement to be considered, and these things touching decreasement ought to

to be opposed and conferred with those that are put befoze in the former parte touching encreasement.

And we haue heere in this place no few instructions of pietie and godlines. First, in that he saith, And he placeth there: we learn, that we are directed by the Lord whersoever we become, and that people are by the Lord conueighed and translated whithersoever it pleaseth him.

2 In that he saith, He placeth the hungrie: we learne, that the Lord hath regarde of the poore and needy, and therfore that we must not dispaire though we be distressed euen with extreme necessitie.

3 That pouertie is rather a prouocation vnto vertue, then a let or hinderance, and that all men become moze diligent and chearfull by it then otherwise.

4 We learne that it is no sinne, to bulde houses, to plough the feldes, to plant Viniards, to prouide Cattell: but that we may freely by honest and lawfull meanes encrease our substance, so long as we do it without the hart or preiudice of our neighbour. And we knowe, that thus the holy Fathers did institute their household matters, and encrease their possessions,

5 We learne, that the Lord hath a speciall and peculiar care of all thinges, yea ruyn of our beastes and Cattell and of most vile and abiect thinges.

6 We learne, that in all these things our en- deuours take no place, except the Lord vouch- safe to helpe vs with his blessing, and to giue an encrease. And therefore if any thing come well to passe, it is to be ascribed onely to the Lord, and we are to thank him for it.

7 We learne, that it falleth out againe by the good will and pleasure of God, that our goods and substance doe decrease: and therefore that we are patientely to take in good parte, whatsoeuer the Lord shall determine of vs.

8 We learn, that God hath diuers and sundry waies and meanes to punish and humble vs for our sinnes. And if at any time we perceiue our goods to waste, and yet cannot finde out the manner or causes of it: againe when we apply all our dyttes and deuises to the better restoring of our decayed estate, and doe nothing preuaile: let vs conclude that we are lettred and hindred by the good will and pleasure of God. and that he would so humble and abase vs, and perhaps worke some spirituall good thinges in vs and by vs, or at least will againe in his good time restore all thinges
Double

double and treble vnto vs.

And from hence it behoueth vs also, whilst we are tossed and turmoyled in this world with diuers and sundry perils, whilst after happy issues and successes we are greued with many and great, and as well with publike as private distresses, to fetch manifold comfort and consolation, and to apply all and euerye the things her discoursed to our present estate and condition.

And he powreth contempt vpon Princes.)
The third example, drawn from the alterations and sundry successes in diuers degrees of men, namelye of Noble men and poore men, which two orders or degrees he expressely mentioneth in stead of al other. We may sometimes, saith he, beholde princes, which are in a foueraigne dignitie, either sodeinly or by little and little beyond al mens expectation to be cast downe in great extremetie, to be contemned of all, and to be driuen to flie euen the company of men with whome they were before conuersant and acquainted. Againe on the other side some poore obscure person, and one that is vexed with many distresses, God wonderfullie deliuereth, encreaseth with riches and honours, and finally aduanceth to a great and notable family. In which thinges doubtlesse there is no

man that perceiueſt not the power, iuſtice, goodnes and prouidence of God to be exceedingly apparant, and therfore alſo worthily to be extolled and magnified.

And he very trimly expreſſeth that which maketh eſpecially to the direction of Princes or Potentates, namely contempt. For why? neither grace of body or minde, nor penurie or ſcarſitie nor power or might of the enemies, doth ſo much daunt and caſt downe great States, as contempt. He that is dearly and welbeloued of his owne, whither it be his ſubiectes or kinſfolkes and acquaintance, that man doth as yet ſafely ride in harborough, and theſe will ſticke to him in ſicknes, in the times of neceſſitie; and againſt his enemies: but he that is now deſpiſed and contemned of his owne, hath no refuge left in a manner where to he may truſt any more, neither will a mans enemies lightly ſet vpon him, but when they ſuppoſe him to be forſaken of his friends. We might alleadge ſome examles euen of our time, but that it would be thought an odious matter to touch by name ſuch miſery & infelicitie of any. And Saul and ſuch like did then firſt of all begin to quaille, when as becomming irkeſome to every one, they grewe into contempt, and were forſaken of all their ſubiects. as Saule alſo

also himselfe, *1. Sam. 22.* complained, that all men had conspired against him, and clinged rather to *Dauid* then to him. But finelye to the amplifying of the contempt, *Isa* saide to be powred vpon them, that is, largely and manifoldely to be sprinkled or cast. Likewise to expresse the greatnes of the miseries, which such princes contemned and despised doe taste off, he addeth that which is the vttermost of all calamities, and euen the winding vp of al the rest: namely that they wander in the wilderness out of the way, and withdrawe themselves from the company and societie of men knowing vnto them.

And he doth no lesse gallantly in the other parte lay forth euery thing touching the deliuerance and exaltation of the poore. And it is a very fine resemblance or similitude, wherein he saith that he maketh them families, like a flocke of Sheepe. He signifieth by this similitude, that they which were lately abjects and outcasts, are now promoted and enlarged, and not only they themselves advanced to honour, but also that their whole families doe grow vp and spread abroad, no other wise then flocks of sheepe are wont to encrease, which continually through one supply of yong ones following an other are multiplied & encreased: which

encreasement

encreasement and multiplication ought to be numbred amongst the excellent blessings of God. And what thing more notable or glorious can be spoken of any, than that a man by his owne proper vertue mounteth to high estate, and besides maketh his whole house and familie more noble and famous : as *David* ennobled and commended to his whole posterity the familie of *Iesse* and tribe of *Iuda*, &c.

And there is also manifold doctrine propounded unto vs in this example.

1 We learne that riches, power, dignitie, principallitie, and whatsoeuer else is of this sort, is giuen onely and alone of God.

2 That none are placed in so high a degree, but that they be in danger of falling, and are at all times to feare and suspect the same.

3 That we are neuer at any time to hope vpon the vnstable thinges of this worlde, but onely vpon God, in whose hand are all things and who wisely ruleth and ordereth all things.

4 That the first step to ruin and ouerthrow in great men is, if they begin once to be contemned of their subiects or allies.

5 And certaine it is, that this very contempt commeth to passe by the wil or procurement of God for sinne, God so mouing the hearts of men, as he moued the hartes of the

Israelites

Israelites to forsake Saule.

6 That there followe this contempt many other dangers and discommodities, as flight, banishment, &c. after which sort also we haue seene princes to be cast out by their subiectes, compelled to wander and straye to and fro, to line of other mens deuotion, &c. finally also to despaire.

7 Wherefoze that princes and great estates ought to labour and endeuour, that they may rather of their commons be beloved, then feared.

8 In the mean time subiects ought to know that they are not soz small causes to contemne o2 forsake the Magistrate, untill by the singular dispensation of God they seele themselves to be moued, by y^e which lightly alwaies some great & weighty causes are first made knowne and manifest.

The righteous shall see it, and reioyce.) There is not heere a conclusion hortatory by a verse interlaced o2 put betwene as in the proofes besoygoing, but onely a graue concluding sentence, which doth admonish all men touching the true vse & right obseruatiō of the lawkes and determinations of the Lord in such examples. For the Prophets meaning in this verse is, that all sorts of men as wel god

as

as bad should be stirred vp by the consideration of such alterations in mens matters, to take thereby some wholesome doctrine to the profitable instruction of their consciences. And he will haue the godly to reioyce, but the wicked to be terrified and induced to humilitie. He saith all iniquitie, for all y^e woorkers of iniquitie, by the figure antonomasia. Whereupon we learne here.

1st That all things which are done and accomplished here in this worlde, are ordeined by the singular prouidence of God to some profitable and necessary blessing.

2nd That the same ought of all men diligently to be considered, and so to be taken as that they may vnderstand and acknowledge them to be done for their instruction and admonition.

3rd That the godly ought to take occasion of spirituall ioy and comfort by the things which they see wrought and accomplished by the will of God.

4th And specially, when they see the proud and cruell tyrants cast down from their seates by the becke and assignement of God.

5th Not that it is the part of a godly man to reioyce at y^e calamities of other, which doubtlesse might seeme to procede from an enuious and

and malicious minde: but for because the sub-
uersion of the wicked serueth to the setting
forth of Gods power and iustice, secondlye to
the deliuerance of y godly, by whome also God
shall then moze franklye and freelye be praised
and magnified then befoze.

6 That God doth oftentimes worke diuers
signes and wonders, and thrust the mightye
from their seates, that the rest of the vngodlye
might haue an example whereby to be terrifi-
ed, and prouoked to amendement of life: at
the least that their wicked enterprizes might
be dasht, and come to nought.

All which things doo aswell admonishe vs
touching the obseruation of Gods prouidence
and wonderfull dispensation of and in all the
things that are brought to passe heer bylowe,
as also make not a little to the matter of com-
fortes and consolations. And like as the Pro-
phet addeth these thinges to the present exam-
ple, so ought they by vs to be applied to all and
euery the euent, which are daylye sene to
come to passe, and in which the power, iustice
and goodnes of God are plainly discerned and
made manifest. And thus much touching the
confirmation of this Psalm, stuffed and re-
plenished with sundry and most beautifull ar-
guments and examples.

Who

Who that is wise, will obserue these things, and they shal vnderstand the louing kindenes of the Lord.

The conclusion of the whole Psalm, as touching the true vs of those wordes which haue hitherto bene declared, inuiting all men to the diligent consideration of all the wondrous woorkes, which thzough the pzouidence of God are dayly seene ordinarilye to come to passe, and cheerly of those (and such like, which haue hitherto thzoughout the whole confirmation bene discoursed, in the which the godnes, power and righteousness of God doe most clereely shine. And truly doth this conclusion answer to the very beginning. For in the beginning all men were pzouoked to praise and celebrare the Lord for his notable and great mercy, and for his infinite godnes apparant and conspicuous in all things: and now in the conclusion he hereby pzompteth vnto y mndes of all men, that by the things which haue hitherto bene declared, it may abundantly be perceiued, how great the mercye and louing kindenes of the Lord is. and therfore y it is the partes of godly wise men diligently to obserue and mark these things, that thereby they may learne, that they ought at all times to praise God for so notable and excellent woorkes.

And there is heere in the Hebrue a changing of the number, when as in the former part of the verse it is said in the singular number He will obserue, and then immediatlye in the plurall They shall vnderstand. An vsuall phrase of speaking in the Scriptures. And we learne in this conclusion :

1 That there are none truly wise, but the godly : and on the other side that all the wicked and vngodly, are foales : touching which thing *1 Corinth 1 & 2*, and *Psal. 14*.

2 That the true and spirituall wisdom consisteth chiefly in the obseruation of the wonderfull workes of the Lord, and in the vnderstanding of his goodnes.

3 We learne by the beholding of outward and visible things, which are daily seene in the world, that we ought to climbe vp to the contemplation of spirituall and heauenly things, especially of the power, goodnes and righteousness of God : touching which thing *Rom, 1*.

4 That by all the thinges which come to passe, we ought to take occasion of well doing and of praising God.

And seeing these last wordis haue respect to all the thinges which are declared in the confirmation, it followeth that euen in the euills that are sent as well as in the deliuerance from euils,

euills, the mercye of God ought to be considered. They shall vnderstand, saith he, The mercies or louing kindenes of the Lord. For whether it be so, that God sendeth afflictions, or whither it be so that he deliuereth from them, yet that he dealeth mercifully, iustly and wisely, we haue before sufficientely and at large declared. But to know, that euen crosses and calamities also doe come to passe by the mercy of God, and that the mercye of God shall not be wanting to those that are afflicted with them: this is in very deed the fountaine & wel-
spring of all consolatio. For which cause seeing it was our purpose to entreate of Gods prouidence and of the comforts to be drawn from the same, we think we haue not done amisse, in that we haue taken vpon vs at this present to expound this Psalm before the rest. It was meete indeed, that we should better and more fully haue persequed our duty in this behalf: but when we both saue the booke to encrease beyond our expectation, and also that hauing set downe the chafe and principall heads we supposed that we had giuen forth plenty of thinges sufficient, wherein the godly also by continuall meditation might exercise and solace themselves, we conceiued good hope in our minde, that this labour of ours (whatsoeuer it be

be) would be allowed and accepted of all modest and well meaning men. Wherefore this shalbe the ende of our exposition vpon the Psalme.

The epilogue or conclusion.

These things had I in a readines against the infinite rankes of evils and calamities that now range openly in the world, to minister by way of comfort, to all the afflicted, but especially to the godlye and such as feare God. And forsomuche as we saue the place touching Gods prouidence to be most profitable for the raising of fitte matter and furniture of comforts, we haue taken in hand to vnfolde this, vtterly omitting all other of the same sorte whatsoeuer. And first of al we haue declared by way of teaching, what is properlye to be vnderstode by the name of Gods prouidence: and that there is a prouidence, we haue proued by many clere and forcible reasons, confuting those things that might seem to be brought to y^e contrary. Next we haue shewed wherin Gods deuine prouidence differeth from the foreknowledge, predestination and wisdom of God: and likewise we haue proued that prouidence is not

onely vniuersall, as many suppose, but also
 speciall and particular, again dispatching all
 those things, which we suspected might be ob-
 iected by the defenders of the contrary parte.
 Then from hence we proceeded to teache and
 declare, that neither fate or destinie ought to
 be auouched, nor chaunce or fortune nor con-
 tingens or haphazard to be graunted, where
 the due knowledge of Gods prouidence is,
 and the same worthily weighed and este-
 med. Lastly also we haue discussed this que-
 stion, namely whither Gods prouidence doth
 bring necessitie to thinges prooued or no.
 Which points thus handled and discoursed,
 we came to the second parte of our worke,
 and shewed at large, and as farforth as the
 method of our matter seemed to require, that
 al the things which were taught by vs of and
 concerning Gods prouidence, auayled verie
 much aswell to manye other spirituall mat-
 ters, as also especially to the fetching of com-
 fortes from thence against all kinde of perils
 and dangers whatsoeuer. Last of all we haue
 added also a Psalm, preaching most plainly
 and plentifully aswell of Gods prouidence, as
 also of the comforts to be looked for from the
 same. It remaineth that you my good brethren
 vnto whom these petie matters of ours shall
 come

come, doe rightlŷe vse them, and apply them, as much as is possible, to your benefite and commoditie. I doubt not, but many might haue put forth better things: and I dare be bolde to say this, that we also could without any great difficultie haue brought many other things fitte for our purpose: but these same things I hope, I had almost sayde I am sure and certain, will minister great and exceeding profit to godly mindes, and I trust will satisfie all those that being carried with no curiositie, haue learned at least to be contented with meane and measurable matters.

And to the intent that all men might imbrace these things with the moze charefulness of minde, it were conuenient to adde to some things touching the profitableness and necessitie of the knowledge of Gods prouidence: but for the godly I am perswaded this thing is not greatly needfull: and as for the rest it is better y^e experience should perswade this matter vnto the (whilest they shall perceiue in the time of their troubles that by the consideration of Gods prouidence, working all in all, they are somewhat eased of their græfs) then y^e they should be brought to confesse it by a certain eagernes of speech. This can I say boldly with our *Psalmist*. He that is

B b. ij.

wise,

wise, and rightly instructed in the knowledg of Gods prouidence, will obserue and marke all those things that he seeth to come to passe in this world, by the wil of the Lords & vndoubtedly he shal vnderstand, that euen in al the aduersities which are sent the singular mercye and goodnes of God do shine and appeere: which doubtlesse is such a thing, as the minde may safely rest vpon it. In summe, I dare be bolde to say, that the true blessednes, so farfoorth as mayebee obtained in this life, is settled in the knowledg of Gods prouidence: on the other side that he that is ignorant of this, can neuer haue any thing wherwith assuredly to comfort himselfe, and therefore is plunged in extreme misery. Nay he scarcely perceiueth himselfe to be a man that is not carried with the care of a more neere knowledg of it.

But it behoueth, befoze I make an end of speaking, to adde in two or thre wordes (as they say) somewhat touching the true vse of such diuine comfortes, as we haue heaped together in this place. So ought they to be taken, as that they may procreate and beget in vs other spirituall frutes also: that is to say, we must in no wise be made secure by them, so as we should vtterly shake off al feare: and much lesse must we be hardened in our hearts.
and

and conceiue as it were a Stoicall indolency in our mindes, or thzough a long custome in euilles be bzought into a forgetfulness of God: but we must be stirred vp to patience, wherby we may take in good part Gods good will and pleasure towarde vs: we must be stirred vp vnto faith, wherby we may praise him, and call vpon him for his helpe for our deliuerance, and at length being holpen giue him also thanks. This ought to be the true and lawfull end of all diuine consolations, to the which end we also haue put forth these things. And heerewithall shalbe closed vp our present discourse, only this will we repeate with the Apostle, and let vs imprint it most deeply & continually in our mindes, *2. Cor. 1.* Blessed be God, euen the Father of our Lord Iesus Christ, the father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, which comforteth vs in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any affliction by the comfort wherewith we our selues are comforted of God.

God will prouide, *Genes. 22.*

The end.